

THE RVLE
OF PERFECTION
CONTAYNING

A BREIF AND PERSPICVOVS
ABRIDGEMENT OF ALL THE WHOLLE
spirituall life, reduced to this only
point of the (vwill of God.)

Vd. 4. 52

Divided into three Partes.

THE FIRST TREATING OF THE EXTE-
RIOVR WILL OF GOD, CONTAYNING
the Actiue life.

THE SECOND OF THE INTERIOVR VVILL
contayning the Contemplatiue life.

THE THIRD OF THE ESSENTIALL VVILL
CONCERNING THE LIFE SUPEREMINENT.

COMPOSED BY THE R. F. BENET CAPVCIN,
*Preacher, of the holie Order of Saint Francis, now of the Prouince
of Franco, heertofore called VV. Fitch. of Canfeld in Essex.*

Vita in voluntate eius. Psal. 29.



Printed at ROAN,

By CARDIN HAMILLION.

An. 1609.



168102

APPROBATIONS OF THIS

Rule of Perfection.

ASVVELLIN LATIN BY THE VERY

words wherin they were written, as also in English; that so it may passe without suspicion, not only amongst those of the English tongue, but also in Countries where it is not understood; which so much the more seemeth necessarie, for that it is dedicated to those which live in such Countries.

EE the subsigned Doctours in Diuinitie
VV of the Vniuersitie of Paris haue diligently read the Rule of Perfection contayning
a breif and perspicuous abridgement of the wholle spirituall lyfe *Actiue*, *Contemplatiue*, and *Supereminent*, all reduced to this one point of the will of God, composed by the R. F. Benet Englishman, of the Order of Capuchins, and haue approued it; which no man will doubt to doe, whosoever following the way of lyfe and of the diuine will of God shall practice this Compendium of pietie, which though it be breif yet is it most full of instruction. Dated the 20. of September in the yeare of our Lord. 1608.

GVYION Vicar ge- BOVCHIER, Chan-
nerall to the Illustrissime celler of the Vniuersitie
Cardinall, and most Re- of Orleans, and Vicar
uerend Archebifshop of generall to the most Reue.
Roan. Bifshop of Orleans.

A. duVAL. } The Kings Readers C. le BEL.
} in Diuinitie.

GAMACH.

GESLIN.

P. LENGLES.

M. MAUCLER.

I Subsigned, *B. Raphael* Prouinciall of the Order of *Capuchins* in the Prouince of *Paris* (though vnworthy) haue most diligently perused this *Rule of Perfection*, or breif and peripicuous abridgement of the wholle spirituall lyfe (to weete) Actiue, Contemplatiue, and Supereminent, reduced vnto one point of the only *vwill of God*, composed by the *V. F. F. Benedict* of our Order; and haue fownd nothing in it contrarie to the true fayth and decrees of the Church; yea, haue most cleerly seene it to be the solid food, and stable foundation of pietie, and a perfect Rule of the wholle spirituall lyfe. VVherfore, it will be most profitable for the pietie and merit of all Christians, and the spirituall aduancement of Religious persōs, and (particularly) will fully satisfie the desire of such as aspire to true Perfection, and the practice of mystical Diuinitie. It is (doubtles) a true guide for those which begin, for such as haue made some progresse, and for those which haue attayned vnto Perfection. In testimonie wherof, wee haue put to our signe, this *Beue of all Saints*. Anno. 1596.

B. R A P H A E L, as aboue.

I Subsigned, vnworthy Prior of the Carthusians of *Cahors*, haue perused with as much diligence, attention of mind, and intention as I could, this *Rule of Perfection* or breif abridge-

ment of the wholle spirituall lyfe, (to weet)
of the Actiue, Contemplatiue, and Superemi-
nent, conforme to the three-fold *vwill of God*
Exteriour, Interiour, and Essentiall. I (certain-
ly) admired to see the holie secrets of the per-
fection of lyfe gathered together, and expo-
winded with wonderfull order and facilitie;
insomuch as like vnto that great Eagle in E-
zechiel, it may worthily seeme to haue car-
ryed away the pith of the mysticall Cedar, and
esteeme that the lecture therof will be most
profitable, seeing it is in all points no lesse
conforme vnto true Fayth then to Pietie, and
most fitting the capacitie of deuout and reli-
gious minds of Beginners, Proficients, and of
the Perfect, entring by order into the practice
therof, as *Qweene Hester* passed through
euery doore to the presence of King *Assue-
rus*, Dated the 20. of September. Anno. 1608.

F. A. Beauconfin.

I Subsigned Bachelor of Diuinitie in the Vni-
uersitie of *Paris*, doe certifie, that I haue
most diligently perused this *Rule of Perfection*
and perspicuous abridgement of the wholle
spirituall lyfe (to weet) of the Actiue, Con-
templatiue, and Supereminent, reduced vnto
one point of the onlie *vwill of God*, the which is
most profitable to all Christians, and specially

for the aduancement and merit of Religious persons; for, it layeth open a most cleer way to the acquiring of perfection, in that it manifesteth diuers hidden errors, which being to many a Rocke of scandall, made some to leaue of, others to contemne, and some to sclander the spirituall life: seing also that it openeth the most pure fountaines of wisdom, explicating the excellent super-anagogicall Doctrine, through ignorance wherof, some are damnablely infected with most corrupt maners; some doe ignominiously betake themselves to the cisternes of heathen bookes, not hable to containe the waters of grace; others as blind doe doubt in the Catholike fayth; others to their great shame make litle progresse in the knowledge of God; others to no small detriment of the hearers doe teach Diuinitie with great negligence; others adhearing to the killing letter, and spending all theyr labour in the outward barke of VVisdome, neither goe forward to reap the fruit therof, neither hastning to the Abnegation of themselves, are viuiified with the vnitue spirit of God. All which being in this Rule sweetly refrayned, truly directed, wisely illuminated, deiformely perfectioned, it is worthy to be put to the Presse, and published to the glorie of allmightie God, augmentation of the Fayth, to the conuersion of sinners, consolation of Religious, and perseverance of the perfect, in whoes mindes it ought

to be day and night ruminated. Finally ; it containeth nothing contrarie to the Catholike , Apostolike , and Romaine Church. Dated the 8. of May 1596.

Poullier.

APPROBATIONES REGVLÆ
Perfectionis.

NOS subsignati Doctores Theologiae facultatis
Parisiensis, seriò legimus Regulam Perfectionis continentem breue & dilucidum Enchiridion
vitæ spiritualis, Actiuae, Contemplatiuae, & Super-
eminens (id est) Voluntatis diuinæ, a R. P. Bene-
dicto Anglo, Ordinis Capucinorum compositum ; &
probauimus : quod & plenissimè faciet, quisquis bre-
ue hoc pietatis Compendium, sed cumulatisimè in-
structum, secutus viam Vitæ & Voluntatis diuinæ,
insistet. Datum 20. Septem. An. seculari sacro. 1608.

G V Y I O N, Vica- BOVCHIER, Can-
rius Generalis Illu- cellarius Vniuersitatis
strissimi Cardinalis, & Aurelianensis, & Vica-
Reuerendiss. Archi- rius Generalis Reue-
episcopi Rhotoma- rendiss. Episcopi Au-
genfis. relianensis.

A. du VAL. } Lectores Regij C. le BEL.
} in Theologia.

GAMACH.

GESLIN.

P. L'ENGLES.

M. MAVCLERC.

EGO subsignatus F. Raphael Prouincialis pro-
uincia Parisiensis Fratrum Minorum Capuci-
norum licet immeritus, breue hoc & dilucidum En-
chiridion totius vite spiritualis (scilicet) Actiua,
Contemplatiua, & Supereminentis, ad vnicum instar
solius Voluntatis diuinae directum, & a V. P. P. Bene-
dicto nostri Instituti compositum, diligentissime per-
legi; nihilque in eo inueni quod fidei Orthodoxae aut
decretis Ecclesiae repugnet; quinimò illud cibum esse
solidum, stabileque fundamentum pietatis, & normam
perfectam totius vite spiritualis clarissime compre-
hendi: vnde ad pietatem & meritum omnium Chri-
stianorum, & ad spiritualem profectum Religiosorum
conducet plurimum, eorum verò desiderio qui ad verā
perfectionem, & mysticā Theologia praxim aspirant,
abundè quidem satisfaciet. Est sanè Incipientium,
Proficientium, & Perfectorum verus praeceptor. In
cuius rei testimonium signum nostrum apposuimus,
Vigiliā omnium Sanctorum. Anno. 1597.

F. R A P H A E L, vt supra.

EGO subsignatus Carthusia Cadurcina Prior
immeritus, hoc breue Enchiridion vite spiritua-
lis, Actiua, Contemplatiua, & Supereminentis, uni-
trinae voluntati diuinae Exteriori, Interiori, &
Essentiali consonum, à V. P. Benedicto Anglo,
Ordinis Capucinatorum D. Francisci compositum,
quantū potui diligentia, attentione animi, & inten-
tione perlegi. Suspexi utique sacratiora vite perfec-
tionis arcana miro ordine & facilitate deligi & delu-

cidari, ita ut quasi Aquila illa grandis in Exechiele
Cedri mysticæ medullâ tulisse meritiſſimè videatur.
Et quia non orthodoxè minùs quàm piè per omnia
ſcripta eſt, & ad piarum & religioſarum mentium,
Incipientium, Proſcientium, & Perſectorum captum
maximè accommodatum (dummodò ut Eſter cum
ad Aſſueri conſpectum, ingrediamur cuncta per ordi-
nem oſtra) ſummâ cum utilitate legi poſſe cenſeo.

Datum 20. Septembr. anno a partu virgineo. 1608.

F. A. BEAUCOVSIN.

EGO ſubſignatus Baccalaureus in facultate
Theologiæ Pariſienſi, certum facio me breue hoc
& perlucidum Enchiridion totius vitæ ſpiritualis
(ſcilicet) Actiuæ, Contemplatiuæ, & Su-
pereminentis, ad vnicum inſtar ſolius voluntatis
diuinæ directæ, diligentiffimè perlegi. Quod ad uti-
litatem omnium Chriſtianorum, tum maximè Religio-
ſorum proſectum & meritum confert plurimùm, &
perfectioni acquirendæ clariffimum præbet iter, cum
peruios errores occultos deſignet, qui fuerunt permul-
tis lapis offenſionis derelinquendæ, nonnullis contem-
nendæ, alijs etiâ probris infectandæ ſpiritualis vi-
tæ: ſapientiæ limpidiſſimos fontes aperit, illuſtrem
ſuperanagogicam doctrinam & veram Theologiam
explicando, cuius ignorantia alij corruptiſſimis mori-
bus damnabiliter ſe coinquinant, alij ad cisternas li-
brorum Gentilium (non valentes continere aquas
gratiæ) turpiter ſecedunt, alij in fide Catholica mente

capiti hesitant; alij in cognitione Dei cum magno dedecore minus proficiunt; alij negligentius Theologiam cum magno detrimento pertractant; alij litteræ occidenti adherentes, & corticibus sapientia insudantes, neque progrediuntur ad illius carpandos fructus, neque ad suipsorum Abnegationem properantes, spiritum Dei vniriuo viuificantur. Quæ omnia cum in hoc Enchiridio suauiter coerceantur, verè dirigantur, sapienter illuminentur, deiformiter perficiantur; typis & omnium lumini mandari dignum est, ad Dei Omnipotentis gloriam, Fidei augmentum, Peccatorum conuersionem, Religiosorum consolationem, Perfectorum perseuerantiam; quorum omnium animis diurno nocturnoque labore versari debet. Ceterum Fidei Catholica, Apostolica, Romana, nihil contrarium continet. Datum 8. Maij. An. 1596.

POVLLET.

Licentia Superiorum.

EGO frater Leonardus Parisiensis, Ordinis fratrum Minorum Capucinorum nuncupatorum, in prouincia Parisiensi Commissarius (licet immeritus) potestate ad id mihi facta a Reuerendo admodum Patre Siluestro ab Assisio, Ministro nostro generali; facultatem concedo vt liber inscriptus Regula Perfectionis, vel, Voluntas diuina continens tres partes; Item liber inscriptus Eques Christianus, continens duas partes; Item denique, vt libri duo diuersorum Opusculorum spiritualium, vnus Tractatum, al-

ter Epistolarum, a Re. Patre Benedicto Anglo, Pre-
dicatore eiusdem Ordinis, & Conuentus Rhotomagen-
sis Guardiano, nec non Nouitiorum magistro, typis
mandentur, grauium prius & doctorum in Theo-
logia hominum iudicio approbatus; seruatis
insuper omnibus de iure seruandis.

In quorum fidem, has litteras
manu nostra subscriptas, si-
gilloque nostro muni-
tas dedimus. Rotho-
magi 23. Iunij.
1608.

F. Leonardus, qui supra.





TO THE. R. AND MOST DEVOUT
Lady Abbesse of the Religious companie of En-
glish-women of the Order of S. Briget ; to
his twoe cosins (Visemans) of the
same Order , and to all the rest
of that holie familie at
Lysbone.

IF the light of Natures lamp hath so
shined in the obscure closet of a
Pagans breast, that therby hee
brought forth this no lesse true
then worthy sentence , *Non nobis solum nati sumus,*
sed ortus nostri partem amici , partem parentes,
partemque patria vendicat , VVe are not borne
for our selves alone, but of our birth our kinf-
folk must haue parte , our freinds likewise
must haue their due , our Countrie also chal-
lengeth therein her right ; how much more
ought the shining Sun of Grace and Fayth
illuminate the Chriltian heart , wherby to
bring forth alike or better Sentence ? as
did hee whoe sayd , *Optabam ego ipse Anathe-*
ma esse à Christo pro fratribus meis , qui sunt cognati
mei secundum carnem, qui sunt Israelitæ, I desired
to be *Anathema* my self from *Christ* for my bre-

The Epistle.

thre, which be my kinsfolke according to the
flesh, whoe be *Israelites*. And if Nature could
bind vs with so strong a band to our Freinds,
Parents, and Country, how much more should
the link of Grace, and chayne of Charitie tie
vs therunto? Seing then such is my Obliga-
tion, and that the reuolution of some yeares
calleth vpon mee for performance therof, I
was glad now to haue fownd out a meanes,
wherby at once to discharge three duties,
and by one payment to cancell a threefold
obligation; by presenting this *Rule of Perfection*
to such a house and companie, which is com-
posed of my deer freinds, neereft kinsfolke,
and natiue Countrie. Not, for that I think the
weaknesse of so small a matter can haue
strength enough to dissolue so strong a band,
or so small a present can satisfie so great a
debt; but that I hope yow will take it as a to-
ken, and messenger of a mind more willing
then hable to performe her obligation; which
Rule I hauing squared out according to mine
owne interiour practice since my calling to
Religion (though truly, with great negli-
gence) and hauing participated the same, and
therwith informed others of my calling
though not of my Countrie; I thought good
now to communicate it vnto others of my
Countrie, though not of my calling; and for
that purpose haue translated it into English,
though with more difficultie then I writ it in

The Epistle.

the language wherein I made it. For eloquent words and flowing discourse (I know) yow expect none, aswell because that our calling a-voideth curiositie and professeth plaine simplicitie, and that my so long discontinuance of the tongue can afford no smooth discourse; as also (especially) for that in spirituall Rules, and documētts touching interiour exercise, it fareth not as in other books which cheifly (or at least, partly) tend to delight the eare by pleasant wordes, or moue affection by pleasing tearmes, but by plainesse of Documents, and cleernesse of Doctrine to lay open the way to Perfection, and an easie and familiar meanes to practice the same. Thus heartily wishing your dayly progresse in all vertue, I commend yow to Gods holie protection, and my self (poor sinner) by your prayers to his sweet mercie.

*Your poor Brother and Cofin in Christ
Iesus, B. Benet, called heeretofore. VV.
Fitch.*



TO THE DEVOUT RELIGIOUS

*English-women of the Couent of S. Vrsula at
Louayn, and of S. Benet at Bruxells,
and particularly to his deuout Cosins
VVisemans in both howses,
and to all other Religious
of our Nation in
Flanders.*

DEVOUT sisters in Christ, and deer
Cosins. Many yeares haue passed
since this booke was dedicated to
the aboue sayd of S. Briget, but being
twoe sundry tymes put to print in England
(whear I was then in Prison) it was both
tymes taken, though it doth not in any wise
touch either Controuersies or matters of Sta-
te. Since which tyme hath bein erected that
your Religious howse at Bruxells, and aswell
the same as that of Louayne hath bein better
knowne vnto mee, for the entercourse of let-
ters betwixt yow and mee (my louing Cosins
at Louayne) and by your rendition (my good
Cosin at Bruxells.) And because I owe yow
and your howses the like office as to the a-
boue sayd (for the same causes of kinred and
Countrie) and that, as sayth the Philosopher,
Bonum quò communius eo melius, The good is
so much the better, by how much it is

The Epistle.

more common : and (finally) for that the
subiect of the booke particularly fitteth those
of your vocation ; I haue thought good to
direct it also vnto yow , the respect of the
smallnesse of the worke dissuading therfrom,
wayenglesse in the one scale of the ballance
of my consideration, then the ponderousnesse
of the sayd causes put against it in the other,
especially the Ballance being held in the hand
of that charitable affection which shall neuer
cease to worke, and doe the office which kin-
ne and Countrie call vpon mee to performe.
And though the thing both in respect of it
self, and of so sinfull and vile a wretch from
whome it cometh , be of so small valew and
so vnworthy the printing , that I haue often
tymes hindred the same (howsoeuer the
great persuation of others, and due affection
to the aboue named, made mee consent ther-
unto in *England*) yet in tyme perceiuing it is so
acceptable in these partes to all sortes , as well
of authoritie as of learning and perfection;
and seing it so much published throughout
France though paynfully by writing ; I haue
bein more encouraged to present the same
vnto yow : though for the third part thereof, it
is not thought meet to be published, as trea-
ting of matters somewhat high for the capa-
citic of the common sort. And if it bring
yow any spirituall profit , I beseech yow re-
compense mee with this prayer , that I be not
like

The Epistle.

like the candle which whilst it lighteneth
others consumeth it self ; nor as the Con-
duit pipe , which conuayeth water
from the fountaine to others,
not retayning any for it
self. Fare yee
well.

Your poor Brother and Cosin in
Christ Iesus, B. Benet , called
heertofore. VV. Fitch.





TO THE READER.

GENTLE Reader, There is a certaine booke intituled the *Method to serue God in Latin, Franch, and English* which in the beginning, speaketh of the *vwill of God*: Least therefore thou mayst think that this booke be (as it were) the same, or not much different, and so thy affection to read this be diminished, thou shalt vnderstand, that they differre in all matters; in subiect, method, and pretended scope: For, that booke hath but some one Chapter or document of the *vwill of God*, but this, three bookes or partes; that goeth to other discourses of vertues and vices, but this pursueth this only point of the *vwill of God*; that propowndeth it as the end of our actions, but this as the beginning, progresse, and ending, of the wholle spirituall life, geuing precepts for euery one: Yea, that booke in the place where it toucheth the *vwill of God*, sheweth not how to know it, but this geueth meanes how to know the same; that, speaketh of the *vwill of God*, without distinction, but this distinguisheth it mystically into three; Finally, that booke speaketh of the Exterious will, but this entreth

To the Reader.

into the knowledge, tast, and feeling of the Internall will as it is spirit and life, yea, and essentially God himself, as is shewed in the third part. But it is needlesse to speak of all the differences which by reading thou shalt find to be such, as that there is no conueniencie betwixt them: only the *vwill of God* which is heer taught throughout the *Active*, *Contemplative*, and *Supereminent* lyfe, is thear touched in the beginning of that booke of *Active* lyfe. And if this had affinitie with that, it would neuer haue bein so required and published in *France*, especially so paynfully by writing before it was printed, and (particularly) amongst religious Orders, whear that booke is so common. As for the other three bookes mentioned, they be not yet printed, though readie to goe to the presse. And if this or they bring vnto thy sowle any profit or consolation, I desire for recompense some memorie of mee in thy holie prayers. Fare well.

Thine in Christ Iesus
B. Benet.

THE

The following are the names of the persons who have been appointed as members of the Board of Directors of the City of New York, for the year ending December 31st, 1908.

Name	Residence
John A. B. Smith	New York City
J. H. Jones	New York City
Wm. L. Brown	New York City
C. E. Davis	New York City
F. M. Wilson	New York City
G. K. Miller	New York City
H. R. Taylor	New York City
I. N. White	New York City
J. P. Black	New York City
K. Q. Green	New York City
L. S. Hall	New York City
M. T. King	New York City
N. U. Lee	New York City
O. V. Clark	New York City
P. W. Adams	New York City
Q. X. Baker	New York City
R. Y. Campbell	New York City
S. Z. Evans	New York City
T. A. Foster	New York City
U. B. Gibson	New York City
V. C. Harris	New York City
W. D. Ingram	New York City
X. E. Jordan	New York City
Y. F. Keith	New York City
Z. G. Lester	New York City
A. H. Martin	New York City
B. I. Nelson	New York City
C. J. Owen	New York City
D. K. Parker	New York City
E. L. Quinn	New York City
F. M. Reed	New York City
G. N. Shaw	New York City
H. O. Stone	New York City
I. P. Thomas	New York City
J. Q. Turner	New York City
K. R. Vance	New York City
L. S. Ward	New York City
M. T. Young	New York City
N. U. Allen	New York City
O. V. Wright	New York City
P. W. Scott	New York City
Q. X. Bell	New York City
R. Y. Wood	New York City
S. Z. Price	New York City
T. A. Cook	New York City
U. B. Rice	New York City
V. C. Hill	New York City
W. D. Green	New York City
X. E. Carter	New York City
Y. F. Mitchell	New York City
Z. G. Roberts	New York City
A. H. Walker	New York City
B. I. Lewis	New York City
C. J. Gray	New York City
D. K. Hall	New York City
E. L. King	New York City
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N. U. Hall	New York City
O. V. King	New York City
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THE EXCELLENCE OF THE

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and, also, a machine for the purpose of



THE
RVLE OF PERFECTION
CONTAYNING
A BREIFE AND PERSPICVOVS
ABRIDGEMENT OF ALL THE
whole spirituall life, reduced to
this only point of the
(vwill of God.)

Diuided into three partes.

THE FIRST PARTE
OF THE EXTERIOR VVILL OF GOD
COMPREHENDING THE ACTIVE LIFE.

OF THE EXCELLENCY AND VTI-
litie of this exercise, compared vvith others.

CHAP. I.

HA V I N G well considered the
diuersitie of wayes, and multitude
of exercises fownd out and practi-
sed by many learned and deuoute
persons, for the obtaining of true perfection;
and in fine, finding that as they tend all to one
end, so in themselues they are not much dif-

A

I.
Abridge-
ment of
the *v*vill-
le spiri-
tuall life.

ferent, but rather in substance all one, how differēt soeuer they seeme; I haue desired for the greater light and profit of deuout foules and more facilitie, to abridge and reduce them all to one only point, in which may shine and cleerly be seene all the others, and which (not withstanding such breuitie) might be easie to comprehend, and perspicuous to vnderstand: to which effect I could find no point so fit as this of the *v*vill of God; for though the perfect soule and illuminated spirit cleerly doth see and discerne all wayes and exercises in euery one, and euery one in all, principally in the highest and most sublime; yet is this verified rather in this exercise and point of the *v*vill of God then in any other; for that heer in all the other exercises are so cleerly seene, that not only the perfect and illuminated person, but also the beginner (if hee will a little consider) may see them all, and how in the same consisteth all kind of perfections of spirituall life, as in the next chapter shall appear.

2.
Breuitie.

Secondly, this exercise of the *v*vill of God shall be found without all cōparison to be more short then any other; for, that which others doe effect by many circumstances, multiplicities, changings, and degrees, this effecteth at once by one only application of intention. As for example, one that following any other practise would be humble, patient, obedient, or would be dispised, to imitate the passion of

our Sauour, would imitate the passion to be conformable to the Sonne of God; would be conformable vnto him to please God and doe his will; but according to this exercise hee should at the first only applie his intention to the said *vwill of God*. Likewise, he that would eschew euill company to auoid temptation, would auoid temptation to flie synne; would fly synne to escape hell; would escape hell to be saued; would be saued because it is the will of God: but according to this exercise hee should cutt of all these multiplicities and degrees, and euen at first applie his intentiō to the *vwill of God*, propounding and layeng this in his heart; I will auoid euill cōpany because it is the *vwill of God*; wherby alone the soule approacheth neerer to God without comparison then with all the other good intentions together: whear many may note and see their spirituall deceit, whoe doing any good thing spirituall or corporall, doe not at the first, nay nor scarce at the last applie their whole intention to this *vwill of God*.

Further, the practise of this rule is more meritorious as shalbe shewed then *Meritorious* the others, yea though (with this *vwill of God*) they should ioyne with other spirituall exercises, fasting, discipline, lamenting their syns and such like, although (perhaps) to some it seeme not so, whoe measure merit by their sensible deuotion, and

spirituall sweetnes.

*End of
others.*

Moreover, this rule of the will of God is the true end and scope of all others, those serving but as degrees to mount, and as meanes to attaine vnto this, namely to doe the will of God: so that this will of God ought to be so muche preferred before other exercises, as the end before the meanes.

*Fitt for
all.*

Againe, this exercise is more proper and conuenient to all sorts of people then any other, being fitt as well for the perfect as the imperfect, for the spirit illuminated, as for the obscured; because it is as well subtile and sublime as simple and easie.

*without
multipli-
citie.*

Also, it is wholly denudated and void of all multiplicitie, diuersitie, and curiositie of discours or speculation of the witt, so that without difficultie it may be practised by the only feruent will.

*Sure from
deceits.*

It is likewise more assured from deceits, because it is a continuall abnegation of the proper will, fountaine of all errors, and roote of all euils. Which abnegation though it be in all other exercises, yet not so direct nor so strong and violēt as in this, scing nothing is so contrary to the proper will as the vwill of God; the one being common respecting the common good; the other proper seeking priuate gaine. And wheras in other exercises often tymes the curiositie of Intelligence doth please, in this the feruency of the will must

The first parte.

5

faythfully worke ; In others one contenteth him selfe often with a feeble deuotion sensible, but in this operateth the strong Intellectual deuotion.

But aboue all, this point of the *vwill of God* *The end*
excelleth all others in as much as it serueth *and the*
for a rule, and for the end of our actiōs, wher- *meanes.*
as the others serue but for the one or the
other onely : it is (I say) the rule of our ac-
tions, not onely exterior, but also interior,
declaring by his rectitude the obliquitie as
well of the one as of the others : of the exte-
rior, because it declareth which are to be
done, and which to be left vndone, how and at
what tyme to take anything in hand, how
and in what season to endure : of the interior,
in as much as it sheweth how to will and how
to nill ; when to desire and when to refuse ; in
what manner to choose and accept ; in what
fort to omitt and reiect. To be breif, this doth
leuell all our exterior, and illustrate our inte-
rior, rectifieng and cutting of all the croo-
kednes and tortuositie of our actions as well
interne, as externe. It is also the end of the sa-
me actiōs ; end (I say) proportioned to euery
mans capacitie, shewing it self to some as
externe, to others as interne, and to others as
essentiall, which is God himself : end (I say
again) to which the soule commes and ad-
heres, not by the interruptiō of the meanes,
but by the continuation of the same ; not as to

Similie.

another thing different from the meanes, (as it happens in the other exercises) but as to the same and one thing with the meanes, which is proper to this exercise : it being like a sea the water wherof is all one at the shore and beginning as in the maine Ocean and end therof, wherin our soule doth nauigate and mount by continuation of the same tract without any variation, change of obiect, or multiplicitie.

6.

*Perma-
nent.*

And no lesse hath it this excellencie in particular aboue all others ; namely , that wheras others are not durable , nor can be allwayes vsed and practised during a mans whole life, but must be left and laid a side and others practised according as a man goeth forward in perfection ; this contrarie-wise is permanent and serueth a man , and is alwayes continued aswell in the actiue as in the contemplatiue and vnitieue life without changing or interrupting his course of exercise , or breaking the thread of his spirituall practise ; which is no little spirituall good nor smalle profit, seeing that therby much distraction and hndrance is auoided, proceeding from the change and multiplicitie of exercise. For, euen as the

Similie.

child that goeth from one booke or schoole to another is much troubled and new to seeke ; so is hee which changeth from one exercise to another ; yea , some tymes

and that often, man that changeth often, or hath many exercises knoweth not well how to practise any of them all, and that especialie in tyme of tēptation and spirituall warre: for *Similie.* as he which will learne to fence with many kinds of weapons, commonly is not cunning at any, in so much that the enemy assaying him he is easilie hurt or killed for want of skill, so he that hath diuers exercises, ordinarilie knoweth not the perfect practise of any of the and therefore the enemies, the world, the flesh and the deuell assailing him, foorthwith is either slaine or maymed. The reason is, because the soule hauing her will already infeeble by the impulsio of the temptation flieng to her exercise and spirituall weapon, and not being skillfull in handling the same, the enemy whose seeth and knoweth it well, is more encouraged to pursue and follow the weakned will, and shee discouraged and vnable to resist. Yea, some men haue so many exercises that in tyme of battayle they know not which to betake the to, and so many wayes to perfectiō that they follow none; so accomplishing the prouerbe that sayth, *Qui duos insetatur lepores, neutrum capit*, He that hunteth two hares catcheth neither. But otherwise it is with him that hath continually one only exercise, for that without distractiō of spirit, or dissipation of senses heere and there in diuersitie of exercises he remaineth alwayes recollected, and his

with all his powers gathered together, and fixed in one, so that he penetrateth the same euen to the bottome and profunditie therof, and so walketh cōtinually in the light therof, practising the same and conforming his life therunto, and so when the enemy commes to assaulte him he is not vnprovidēd of his weapons, nor doubtfull which to betake him vnto, because he hath but one at which he is very cunning as beīg his daylie practise. And finally, is resolute and stable in his way, and maner of the pursute of perfectiō, as not knowing any but that by which he rūneth the right way with all assurance. Heerin therefore doth this exercise in particular excell all others, because none of them may be continually practised all a mans life, but must be changed according as the soule changeth estate and ariseth in perfection, vsing some at the beginning, others in the progresse, and others in the end, but in this exercise a mā must begin, proceed, and end: so that this *vvill of God* is a spirituall Sea in which each one may saile according to the burthen of his vessell; so as the shallops of the weake foules of beginners doe flote in the roade of the shallow waters of the *exterior vvill*; the barks of suche as be aduāced doe hoist saile; and lāche far ther into the depth of the interior will; and the huge shipps of the perfectest sorte hauing lost all sight of land are retired into the maine sea of the *Essentiall vvill*.

And as this will of God is like the sea, so *Similie*
the obscuritie of our proper will is like the *not and.*
lande; and as he which is in the midst of the
land seeth not the sea at all, so he that is in the
midst of obscure proper will seeth not this
celestial Ocean. And as the greater and more
spacious the lande is, so much farther one is
from seing the sea; so how much greater is
this proper will so much farther is he from
seing this *vwill of God*. Againe, as where the sea
gaineth the land, ther is nothing seene but the
sea, and as according to the measure that it
ouerfloweth the land the sea appeareth; so
wher the *vwill of God* getteth the vpper hand,
ther is so farr nothing but that will; and ac-
cording as the *vwill of God* ouerfloweth the
darknes of our proper will, it taketh place,
and is plainly seene. Finaly, as if ther were no
land at all thear would be nothing but sea; so if
wee had no darknes at all of proper will, we
should see nothing but the *vwill of God*; and
as he that is in the midst of the maine sea
seeth no land; so he that hath attained to per-
fection, and is in the depth of this will seeth
no darknes, but in all things, tymes, and pla-
ces, soeth this heauenly shining light, as in the
third parte shalbe shewed.

*Of the excellency of this exercise in respect of it self,
vvhether is shewved how all other vvayes and
perfections are heerin contained.*

HAVING shewed the profit and excellencie of this vvill of God in comparison of other exercises, it followeth also that wee breifly declare the same in regard of it self, all which excellency is comprehended in this, that this rule and exercise containeth all others, and all kind of perfection.

1. For, if one constitute perfection in the renouncing of him self as our Sauour teacheth, *Qui vult post me venire abneget semetipsum*, Hee which will follow mee let him renounce him self, it is in this vvill of God; seing one can not doe the same but by renouncing himself and his owne will.

2. Secondly, if one thinke that perfectiō consisteth in resignatiō, as *Christ* teacheth, *Fiat voluntas tua*, Thy will be done, it is in this exercise; because hee that doth the vvill of God is resigned, seing that resignatiō is nothing els but a disposition and perfect preparation to receiue willingly whatsoever that diuine will shall ordaine or dispose of himself, either in suffering or doing things hard or easie, pleasant or bitter, honorable or dishonorable and abiect, all which hee must needs haue whoe accomplisheth the vvill of God.

3. Moreouer, if yow esteeme puritie of heart to be perfection, as it is written, *Beati mūdo corde*, Happie are the pure of heart, it is heer al-

so; for what can make the heart more pure then the *vwill of God* which so violently plucketh vp, and extirpateth out of it the roote of all impuritie, namely, proper will, whence springeth as from their Origin all affections, pactions, and impurities, and whatsoeuer other spirituall darknes: for, as two contraries can not be together in one subiect, as fire and water can not be together in the same vessell, so can not proper will and the *vwill of God* be together in the same soule; and no more then the obscuritie of the darke night can abide the brightnes of the shining Son, no more can the darke night and obscuritie of proper will endure the splendour of this shining son of Gods *vwill*, but flyeth as soone as it appeareth, and presently is dissipated and vanisheth away.

Further, if perfection consist in the presence of God, and hauing him allwayes before our eyes, as it is written, *Prouidebam dominum in conspectu meo semper, quoniam a dextris est mihi ne commouear*, I alwayes haue God in my sight because hee assisteth at my right hand least I should be moued; it is likewise in this will, because (as shalbe declared) this *vwill of God* is God himself; so that when by doing his will wee haue it present, wee must needs haue God present.

4.

Presence
of God.
Psal 15.

Againe, if perfectiō consist in the knowledge of himself, which not only by the Christiā but

5.

Know-
ledge of
himself.

by the heathen Philosopher is so much inculcated by this so common sentence, *Nosce teipsum*, know thy selfe; it is heer most peripicious: for by the straight line of this vvill of God we come to the perfect knowledge of our selves (that is) of our obscure passions, tortuous affections, inordinate desires, and brutish motions, which before we could not see; for, as the staffe or chalked line seemeth wholie straight or little crooked vntill it be examined by the Ioiners rule by which appeereth the crookednes therof; so our will and desire seemeth to be right or to haue but very little obliquitie, but as soone as this right rule of Gods vvill (the only lawfull and approued measure of mans desire) is applied therunto, presently appeareth the disordered and deformed obliquitie therof. And by this will we may not onely know our selves as touching the old man replenished with imperfections and darkenes, but also as touching the new, (namely) perfection and light; his will being that light and perfection which communicateth vnto our soule all her lights and perfections; so that by the one we see and know the other, for the greates likenes and sympathie which is betwixt them; a man being made by this diuine will *Nouus homo qui secundum Deum creatus est in iustitia & sanctitate veritatis*, A new man, created according to God in iustice and sanctitie of veritie.

Ephe. 4.

Also, if the knowledge of God be Christian ^{Knowv-} perfection, according as is written, *Hæc est ledge of*
vita æterna vt cognoscant te solum Deum verum & God.
quem misisti Iesum Christum, This is euerlasting ^{Ioan. 17.}
life, to know thee the onely true God, and
whom thou hast sent Iesus Christ, it is eui-
dent in this will, seing the *vwill of God* is God
him self, as in the third part shall appeare, so
that who knoweth and doth his will, by con-
sequence knoweth God, which perfection of
the knowledge of God, with the other of the
knowledge of him self was so earnestly desi-
red, and deeplie ingrafted in the heart of our
father S. Francis, that he continued all a night
long in prayer, repeating continually these
only two sentences, O my God, let me know
thee, let me knowe my self.

Likewise, if one desire to attaine to perfect ^{Annih-}
annihillation wherof it is said *ad nihilum re-* ^{lation.}
ductus sum, & nesciui, I am brought to nothing ^{Psal. 72.}
and knew it not, let him imbrace this exerci-
se, for by the liuelie and efficacious operation
of this diuine will, a man is reduced and
brought to nothing, and that both in respect
of the old man and the new: In respect of the
old, wholly and entierely, so that he is no mo-
re; in respect of the new, so is he annihilated
that he worketh no more, nor produceth
any operation as of himself, but by God, with
God and in God, and doth nothing actiue-
ly but passiuely; for although what one doth

hee must needs doe it himself, yet not as of himself though hee that operates is presupposed needs to operate, yet not as agēt but as patiēt (that is) that though hee hath his will, act, and operation in the worke, be it exterior or interior, yet by this perfectiō of Annihilatiō hee seeth they are not of them selves, but are acted and produced by a higher essence and power thē the selfs, which is God; yea, in the perfectiō of this annihilatiō in this diuine will the soule is so abstracted and fixed in God, and so high lifted aboue herself, that shee feeleth not her owne operatiō though most vehemēt, but only the interior operatiō of God, and ouerflowing of those heauēly influences and eternall lights, which are so mighie and haue such power ouer her, that in cōparisō therof her operation is nothing; and so shee is rather said to suffer thē doe, and to be wrought thē to worke; and this especially in the operatiōs intrinsecall: and though in the acts and operations sensible and exterior shee doth some thing, yet loseth she not this annihilatiō, but remaineth still annihilated, because (as is aboue said) shee knoweth by the light of this will that it is not shee as of herself, but *Christ* that liueth in her that doth those good operations, who said, *Without mee yo^rv can doe nothing.*

Vnion.

1. Corin. 6.

As for the perfectiō of Vniō of which is written, *Qui adharet Deo vnus spiritus est*, Hee that adhereth to God is one spirit with him; that shineth cleerly in this *vwill of God*, because that

by forsaking ones owne will and doing his,
wee adheare vnto him, and become one will
and spirit with him.

Touching the perfectiō of diuine cōtēplatiō
wherof the Psalmist saith, *Quismihi dabit pennas*
sicut colūba, & volabo, & requiescā? whoe shall gi-
ue mee wings like a doue, and I will fly and re-
pose; it is heer in full perfection, and that by a
necessarie cōsequēce, as well because that (as is
said) this will purifieth the soule from all pro-
per will, immortificatiōs, passiōs, affectiōs, and
frō all other darkenes, blinding her cleer sight
and detayning her flight of cōtēplation; as also
because that (as is likewise shewed) this will is
the very light of heauē and God himself, illu-
minating and most admirablie eleuating and
nobilitating the soule which it so possesseth.

9.
Contem-
plation.
Psal. 54.

Again, if yow desire the true loue of God and
charitie (*Quod est vinculū perfectionis*) the bond
of perfection; who so doth Gods will keepeth
his cōmaundemēts, and so possesseth the trea-
sure of his loue, himself sayeng, *Qui amat me,*
mādata mea seruabit, hee which loues mee, keeps
my cōmandemēts; and again, *In hoc cognoscetis si*
me amatis, si mandata mea seruaueritis, By this
meanes yow shall knowe whither yow loue
mee or no, if yow keepe my cōmaundements.

10.
Loue of
God.
Ioan. 14.

Finally, if perfectiō consist in the trāsforma-
tion and totall chāge of himself into God, and
putting on Christ, as the Apostle witnesseth
sayeng, *Induite Dominū Iesū*, Put on Iesus Christ,
and, *Vos mortui estis, & vita vestra abscondita est*

11.
Trāsfor-
mation.
Rom 13.
Coloss. 3.

Gal. 2.

cum Christo in Deo. You are dead and your life is hidden with Christ in God ; and , *Viuo ego iam non ego, vivit verò in me Christus,* I liue now, not I, but Christ in me. This perfection (I say) is heerin contained: for that when a man putteth of his owne will for the vwill of God , he putteth of himselfe , and putteth on God , according to S. Paule sayeng ,

Ephes. 4.

Exuite veterem hominem cum actibus suis , & induimini nouum qui secundum Deum creatus est in iustitia & sanctitate veritatis. Put of the old man with his works and put on the new which is created according vnto God in iustice and holines of trueth ; for this will being wholly celestially and diuine, so filleth and possesseth the harte , penetrating the verie bottome and most intimate parte therof , and by an vnspeakable sweetnes, true tast, and perfect feeling of eternall life , and of the delitious presence of the heauenly spouse, doth so drawe, allure, intice, and melt the soule in the loue and admiration therof, that as being molten , and as hauing lost all her forces, and languishing with loue, she remaineth rauished, lost, and drowned in the bottomles sea of heauenly ioyes and eternall light, wher she may iustly say with S. Paule as aboue sayd ,

Galat. 2.

Viuo ego iam non ego, vivit verò in me Christus. I liue now , not I , but Christ in me ; God the father sayeng vnto her , *Hæc est filia mea dilecta in qua mihi bene complacui.* This is my louing daughter in whom I

am

am well pleased, *Hæ requies mea in saculum sæculi, hic habitabo quoniam elegi eam*, This is my resting place for euer, and heer will I dwell because I haue chosen her. Psal. 131.

Thus then may appeare how all the aboue said perfections are contained in this exercise of the *vwill of God*, as also any whatsoeuer or wherinsoeuer the whole or any parte of perfection doth consist; and therefore rightly and not without iust cause is this *vwill of God* so muche praised, and recommended vnto vs in holie scripture, at when it is said (a) *Meus* a Ioan. 4.
cibus est vt faciam voluntatem eius qui misit me, This is my meat to doe the will of him whoe sent me; and (b) *Spiritus quidem promptus est, caro* b Mat. 26.
autem infirma, fiat voluntas tua, The spirit is prompt but the fleash is infirme, thy will be done; and (c) *Hæc est voluntas Dei sanctificatio* c Thess. 4.
vestra, This is the *vwill of God* your sanctification; and (d) *Descendi de cælo non vt faciam vo-* d Ioan. 6.
luntatem meam sed voluntatem eius qui misit me, I came downe from heauen, not to doe my owne will but the will of him whoe sent mee; and the Psalmist, (e) *Vita in voluntate eius*, e Psal. 129
 Life is in his will; and againe, (f) *Domine in volun-* f Psal. 3.
tate tua præstitisti decori meo virtutem, O Lord in thy will thou hast giuen vertue to my beautie, And our Sauyour (g) *Quicumque fecerit vo-* g Mat. 12.
luntatem patris mei qui in cælis est, ipse meus frater, Marc 3.
& soror, & mater est, VVho soeuer doth the will of my father which is in heauen, hee is my

brother, sister, and mother. And although this vvill of God be incōprehensible in itselfe, yet being in our soule it is made comprehensible; and though in it self it be hiddē, yet being ioined with ours it is made knowne: for as God which was incōprehēible, being in our flesh was made comprehensible, and which was inuisible, by ioyning himself with our humanitie was made visible; so it is of his will which is his spirit and himselfe; for before it be in our will it is hidden and vnknown, büt being ioyned therewith it is seene and manifestly known to the soule; and as before the Incarnation hee was only God, but after the vnion with our humanitie was God and man, so the vvill of God which was only diuine, after the vnion with ours is diuine and humaine; and as that man by that vnion might say, I am God, so the will of man by such an vnion may say, I ame the vvill of God, according to Saint

Epist. 1. ad

Elidoniu

inter pri.

& med.

August.

lib. 1. de

Trinit. 13.

circa prin.

8omo. 2.

Gregorie Nazian. sayeng, Deus humanatus est, homo autem Deificatus, God is made humaine, and man is made diuine; And Saint Augustine sayeng, Talis erat illa susceptio qua Deum hominem faceret, & hominem Deum, That was such an assumption or coniunction, as made God man and man God: for as when God was made man man was made God; so when once the vvill of God is made the will of man, the will of man is the vvill of God; and as the diuinitie was not obscu-

red by ; nor in, the humanitie, so neither is the *vwill of God* by, nor in, the will of man; but as the humanitie is illuminated, exalted, magnified, glorified, and deified by the diuinitie, so is the will of man by the *vwill of God* : yet not that this vnion of wills is hypostaticall as was that of those twoe natures, but is made by the linke of loue and light of grace : and heerehence commeth it that the vertuous person hath the spirit illuminated, penetratiue, magnanimous, and couragious; heerehence is it that his whole ioy is in heavenly things; heerehence it proceedeth that hee treadeth vnder foot as most base, that which before hee admired and aspired vnto as his cheefe felicitie; his spirit being no more humaine but eleuated and magnified in God and made one with him.

And though some things in this chapter will not be well vnderstood by the beginner vntill such tyme as hee hath practised the third parte, yet will hee vnderstand it sufficiently for attayning to the knowledge of the end for which I haue written it; namely, to shewe the excellency of this Rule, and how all other exercises are contained heerin. Neither ought any to thinke that wee attribute too much to this exercise or praise it beyond her desert, for that not so much it praised, as the subiect therof

(to weet) the vwill of God, as most worthily preferred before all other points, as that wher in succinctly, plainly, easily, securely, and without change to any other, all other points and exercises are fownded, and wherby wee attaine to all perfections, being practised as is breefly taught in this treatise following.

*The summe or generall practise of all
this Rule.*

CHAP. III.

*The sum-
me of the
whole
practise
of this
Rule.*

HA V I N G seene the excellency and perfection of this rule of the vwill of God, it followeth that wee now shewe the practise therof, touching which wee will heer at the beginning lay downe an ample and generall document, which breifly shall containe the whole matter; namely, that wee doe all our actions only for the vwill of God and because hee will that so wee doe; I say (all our works and actions) as well to containe corporall as spiritual; as well thoughts as words and deeds; no lesse the resistance to temptations, then the acceptance of inspirations: In like manner in casting of any vice or imperfection, as in labouring for any vertue or perfection; as well

in speaking, as in silence ; in accepting labour as repose; sickness as health ; affliction as consolation ; and finally, no lesse in doing the thing naturall then supernaturall ; little then great ; vile and base then excellent and glorious ; and in somme, whatsoeuer is done or suffered by any part or power of the body or soule; all (I say) must be with this only end of the *vill of God* and with this sole intention, because God will so haue it; and this without any exception of thing, tyme, place, or person. This general practise of the *vill of God* comprehending all sortes of actions good and euill, seemeth to be signified by that mysticall nett of the gospell gathering all kinds of fish good and bad, of which our Sauour sayth thus *The kingdome of heauen is like a nett cast into the sea,* And S. Gregorie, that *Regnum cœlorum cœlestis est disciplina* , The kingdome of heauen is the celestiall discipline. Now, what other thing is this diuine will ruling all our actions , and mortifieng all our passions, then this heauenly discipline ? and so is like a nett cast into the sea (to weet) into this instable, wauering, bitter and dangerous life, as a vast Oceane into which the good and religious Christian by faythfull practise casteth this diuine nett, which gathereth togeather all sortes of fishe, which are our thoughts, desires, dissignes, and actions which liue , and haue their mouing in this sea of our life. Hee taketh them when by

Matt 13.

Gregor.

Hom. 11.

in Euan.

(applicatiō of intentiō) he casteth it vpo them, and gathereth them together, when (by diligent care) hee chaseth them vnder the nett forcing thē to swim vnder this diuine will: VVhich being full (by Action) hee draweth it vpp (by Contemplation) vpon the shore or banke of the solid earh (of perdurable repose, according to S. Gregory) and sitting downe, and resting after his trauail, and retiring himself frō multiplicite of affaires, as the Psalmist counsaileth, *Vacate & videte*, Take yee leasure and see, putting the good fish (of works and inspiratiōs) in their vessell (of hearts) and casting forth (by resistance) the bad. For, though this nett of the *v*vill of God take aswell the good as the bad fishe, yet it doth it with cōtrary intentiōs; the good to be reserued for the sustētation of the soule, the bad to be cast out for her exercise; the one and the other in this diuine will which would so haue it. The cause why wee ought to doe all with this sole intētiō of Gods will is, because it is better without cōparison then any other, containing all perfections and making our works more perfect, meritorious, and agreable vnto God then all others, as by the second Chapter before hath bein shewed, and as by this one argument may appear.

Greg. ho.
mil. in
Ioan. 21.
Psal. 45.

Argu-
ment.

Our worke taketh her goodnes of the end for which it is done, hauing in it self no more good thē it receaueth from her end, so that if it bee done for some end that is base, or of little moment, the worke also is base and of little worth

if the end be high, the worke is high, if it be higher and better the worke is higher and better; if finally, highest and best, the worke is best and most sublime. Now, so it is that a higher and better end there can be none then this of the *vwill of God*, nor any like vnto it, and therefore a better or nobler worke there can be none then that which is done with this end of the *vwill of God* nor anylike vnto it; yea, as there is no end equall vnto it, so is there no worke comparable ther vnto. That no other end can be better or equall vnto this is manifest, because this end is immediatly God himself which is *Summū bonū*, The soueraigne good; for which without any other end is done immediatly for the *vwill of God* is immediatly done for God who hath no equall. A man may doe his worke for diuers intētiōs, as to exterminate vice, to attaine vnto vertue, to auoid hell, to come to heauē, to imitate our Sauours exāple all which are good though some more perfect then others: but to doe his worke only for the *vwill of God*, and only to please him, is an intention farr excelling them all, the others hauing their end and obiect only to the Creature directly, and to the Creator indirectly; yea so farr excelleth this intention the others, as hee that doth things natural with this intention, as to walke, yea though they bee pleasant, as to eate and drink, doth more merit and please God then hee which

without this end should fast, doe pennance, discipline, or other painfull works, with any other intention.

1. Deceipt. VVhear may be noted certaine deceipts and abuses: first, of those whose measure all their works, and esteeme their merit only or principally by their exterior, they taking contrariwise their merit from the interior, or end wherfore they be done.

2. Deceipt. Secondly, by this rule appeareth the losse of merit, light, and grace, of the most part of men which doe their naturall works naturally, and not supernaturally as they might doe by this intention, which maketh such works naturall and humaine, supernaturall and diuine.

3. Deceipt. Thirdly, of those which not only in naturall things but also in supernaturall and good works, as almes, fasting, sayeng diuine seruice etc, forget to addresse their intention to God, ~~but~~ doing them either because they can not auoid them, or els of custome not thinking wherfore.

4. Deceipt. Fourthlie, of those which doe their works for reward in heauen, for though they shalbe rewarded, and though it be good so to doe them, yet is it better without comparifon to doe them only for Gods will and to please him, not thinking (as much as is possible) of any reward; and how much the lesse hee so worketh, so much the more shall hee be re-

warded, as approaching so much the neerer to the nature of a Sonne ; and contrariwise how much the more hee so worketh for reward, so much the lesse shall hee be rewarded, as so much more approaching to the nature of a mercenarie or seruant.

Finally, by this rule may appeare the common blindnes of men, whoe for the most part doe their works for other ends, and not for this of the *vwill of God*. *s. Decept.*

But some may heer obiect and say; that if so it be (as wee say) that the worke taketh her merit only of the interior, and that an ordinarie and naturall worke with this intention of the *vwill of God* is more noble and meritorious then the greatest worke done with any other intention, then consequently to receiue that diuine Sacrament of the Altar or any other, is not a better worke then to walke, eate, or drinke. *Obiectio.*

I answer, that in receiuing the Sacraments there be twoe things to be considered; one is the Sacrament as a Sacrament instituted by God to conferre grace; the other is the simple receauing therof, as being our worke and wee the Author therof. If then wee haue respect vnto the first, it is a better worke without comparifon then our ordinarie works, hauing an excellency in it selfe as of it selfe; but if wee haue regard vnto the other, it is nothing better, hauing no excellency in it self as of it *Answer.*

self but is good, better, or best of all according to the intention, yea euell also, for in Iudas it was bad, and in the other Apostles verie good.

2.

Obiection.

If any one object that if the worke take her merit only of the end, then at least as touching the works of penance, as discipline, fasting, almesdeeds, they are no better then ordinarie works being done with this good end and intention of the vwill of God aswell as

Answer.

they. I answer, that it followeth not; for though the worke take her merit only of the end for which it is done, yet are not common works equall with the works of penance if both haue the same end, but the penall works merit more, because that besides the good intention for which they be done, they containe and haue in them selves both satisfaction for the synns past, for (as sayth S. Thomas) *Licet Deus non delectetur pnis nostris, delectatur tamen ijs vt sunt iusta*, Though God be not delighted in our pains, notwithstanding hee is delighted in them as they are iust; and are also a preservation from the synns to come, for (as sayth the Philosopher) *Pana medicina sunt*, pains are medicins. VVherfore, when wee say that the worke taketh all her good of the end, wee meane all the good which it hath more then it had before in it selfe; so that, if two works be done for this vwill of God, wherof the one is good in it selfe, as almes or fasting; the other neither good nor bad in it selfe, as to

In sup-
plemen.

qu. 15. art.

walke or talke; the first of these works shalbe the better, namely so much the better as almes or fasting is better then walking or talking; but if twoe works that be equall in themselves be done, one for this said end of the *vwill of God*, the other for another, as to goe to heauen; the first without comparison shall be the best: yea which is more, if twoe works wherof the one is very good in it selfe, as fasting; the other neither good nor bad, as walking, bee done, the first for to auoid hell, or to come to heauen, the other for the *vwill of God* and only to please him; this walking shalbe much more meritorious and agreeable to God then that fasting as is aboue said; for though that worke of fasting doth much excell this of walking, yet this intention of walking doth much more excell that of fasting, and by consequence makes the worke much better; for euen as a small quantitie of gold excelleth a great masse of lead, so puritie of intention doth farr exceed the valew of corporall things, as penance which is great in shew; though no man must leaue the better deed to doe the lesser good vnder pretext of such an intention, for this were to deceiue him selfe, wherof and of such like deceipts shalbe spoaken heerafter in the fift chapter.

The diuision of this vvill into three partes.

CHAP. IIII.

BUT for the better vnderstanding of this matter, and for more easie conceiuing of all the rest which shalbe said in these three partes of this treatise, it seemeth heere necessarie to make a diuision of this vvill of God, not as they diuide it in schools into the will present and the will subsequent according to S. Damascene; nor into the will of the signe and the will of his pleasure according to some others; nor into precept, prohibition, and counsaile as it pleaseth other doctors; nor finally, according to others diuiding this will of his pleasure into his will efficacious and permissiue: I meane not (I say) to diuide it into these scholasticall diuisions, but into a mysticall diuision, namely into the Interior, Exterior and Essentiall vvill.

The Exterior vvill is a light and rule vvherby to direct vs in the Active life.

The Interior likewise is a light and rule to direct our soule in the Contemplatiue life.

The Essentiall, is a light and guide vvherby to

direct our spirit in the supereminent life.

The first being *active*, the second *contemplative* the third, *supereminent*: the first disposing to the second and the second to the third: the first is for *Beginners*, the second for *Proficients*, the third for the *Perfect*. Neither is this mystical, and threefold diuision new or without fundatiō, but is grownded vpon the doctrine of *S. Paule*, and seemeth rather his diuisiō then mine whear hee sayth, *Ut probetis que sit voluntas Dei Rom. bona, & beneplacens, & perfecta*, That yee may trie ^{12.} which is the will of God, good, pleasing, and perfect. Vpon which words *Lyranus* sayth, that, *Voluntas Dei est bona, quantum ad perfectam*, The will of God is ^{12.} good for the *Beginners*, pleasing for the *Proficients* and perfect for the *Perfect*. According wherunto the will of God which wee call *Exterieur* or *Active* is that which *S. Paule* calleth *Good*, seing it is that wherein the beginners doe exercise them selves: the will of God which wee call *Interieur*, or *Contemplative*, is that which hee calleth *Pleasing*, seing it is that which the *Proficients* doe practice: And that which wee call *Essentiall*, or *Supereminent*, is the same which hee calleth *Perfect*, seing that the *Perfect* employe themselves therein; though these three taken essentially as they are in God, are but one and the same will, and God himself; but are heer deuided for the better vnderstanding of such as tend to perfection; for as in the triumphant church the superior Angels receaue a more ample and vniuersall knowledge of the diuine pleasure, wherof the

Lyra.
in Rō.

De
cel.
hier.
c. 15.

S Th.
in op.
d. hu.
Chri-
stipost
init.

our are not capable, till they diuide, and proportion the same according to theyr capacitie, and so proportioned shew it the (as sayeth S. Denise; so in the Church militant, the holie and illuminated Doctours, receiuing a more ample, and sublime knowledg of the way of God, whereof wee are not capable, haue diuided the same and proportioned it to our capacitie; And S. Thomas sayth: *Lex diuinitatis, &c.* God vvill that highest things being made lesse, and proportioned, should draw vnto those vvhich are in the meane degree; and those vvhich are in the meane degree, should eleuate those vvhich are in the lowest, because this light is not equall in the inferiour nature and the superiour; and therefore the gifts as vvell naturall as supernaturall are said to descend. For sayth S. Ieames, *Euery good and perfect gift commeth from aboue, descending from the Father of lights.* VVherfore following this doctrine and example of the Fathers, wee haue diuided (as aboue said) this diuine light and will; for though wee be altogether vnlike to them in light, yet ought wee to imitate them in communication of doctrine, which though it haue no proportion with theirs, yet ought our method to bee the same.

Of the Exteriour vvill, vvhat it is.

CHAP. V.

The
exte-
rior
vvill.

NOVV to come to the definition or description of the Exterior vvill of God it is the diuine

pleasure knowne by the lawe, and by reason, being
 the rule of all our thoughts, words, and deeds
 in the Actiue life. I say, it is (the diuine plea-
 sure) because though God hath no need of our
 good deeds as the Psalmist testifieth, *Quoniam* Psal. 15.
honorum meorum non indiges, Because thou hast no
 need of my good works, nor hath any losse if
 wee doe euill, nor gaine if wee doe well; yet in
 his bountie and goodnes hee taketh pleasure
 when wee doe well and keepe his commaun-
 dements, as contrariwise by his iustice hee
 is displeased when wee breake them. I say (it
 is knowne) that is, not only hee hath a will
 and pleasure, but hee hath made it known vn-
 to vs, hauing geuen vs to vnderstand wherein
 this will and pleasure consisteth. Farther, I say
 (by the lawe) for therby he hath made kno-
 wen his will. I say (by the lawe) in generall,
 not of God only, to comprehend all kinds of
 good lawes, namely the lawe of God wherof
 is written, *Si vis ad vitam ingredi serua manda-* Matt. 19.
ta, If thou wilt enter into life keepe the com-
 mandements; also the lawe of the Church, it
 being written, *Si non uult ecclesiam audire, sit tibi* Matt. 18.
sicut ethnicus & publicanus, If hee will not heare
 the church, accompt him no better then an
 Ethnicke or Publicane; likewise the lawe and
 commaundement of the spirituall Pastor
 wherof is written, *Obedite praepositis uestris &* Hebra. 13.
subiacete eis, Obay your superiours and be sub-
 iect vnto them; Moreouer, the lawe of Princes

Luc. 20. it being said, *Reddite quæ sunt Cæsaris Cæsari*, Giue vnto Cesar that which is Cæsars. Further,
Rom. 13. the lawe of magistrats, for, *Non est potestas nisi a Deo*, Thear is no power but of God; and *Qui potestati resistit, Dei ordinationi resistit*, Hee that resisteth the Power, resisteth the ordinance of God. Finally, the law of euery mans estate, qualitie, and condition, be hee Lord or subiect, master or seruant, Lay or religious; Moreouer, I say (and by Reason) which I add not without great cause, for that in many things this vvill of God is not knowne by the lawe, thear being many things which the lawe doth not extend it self vnto, neither forbidding nor commaunding them; as (for example) whither to take holie Orders or not, to marrie or to liue single, to take a voyage or to stay at home, to sitt or to stand, to speake or to be filēt, and a thousand other things which dayly come in practise neither commaunded nor forbidden but left indifferent, and a man knoweth not therin which is the vvill of God, which seemeth a hindrance or let to our aboue said Rule, teaching that in all things wee must do it. In this case therefore, whear no lawe resolueeth the matter but leaueth it indifferent, Reason must beare the sway, by which word (Reason) is meant Discretion, piety, and counsaile. How in particular this Reason must resolue euery such doubtfull thing, shall forthwith in the next chapter be
 decla-

declared. Further I say, it is a (Rule) of all our thoughts, words, and deeds, because that as the materiall rule is the thing wherby to drawe a line straight, and wherby wee trie whether any thing be right or crooked; so the *vwill* of God is that wherby wee may drawe only the course of our life, and the intention of our works, words, or thoughts, and wherby wee may knowe whether they bee straight by right intention, or crooked by any blind affection. I say (in the Actiue life) which comprehendeth not only the exterior action, but also the interior intention; not only the outward conuersation, but also the inward reformation.

If one say, why then doe yow call it the *vwill Exterior* seing it toucheth and reformeth the interior? I answer, because it receiueth her light and direction from the exterior; namely by the lawe, and so is most conuersant in the exterior, in doing things or leauing the vndon, in accepting or reiecting according to the same lawe, and finally, because though it be something interior by reason of the rectifying of the intention, yet may it be well called exterior, in respect of the other twoe wills which are wholie conuersant in the interior.

Obiectio.

Answer.

*Rules how to knowe and practise this
(vwill of God) in all things.*

CHAP. VI.

IT is necessarie that after hauing declared what this will is by the aboue said definition in generall, wee shewe it in euery thing by some rule more particular, that so knowing what is to be done and what left vndone, what to be accepted and what reiected, wee may in all things doe the vwill of God as before hath bein taught by the aboue said generall rule in the third chapter. This particular rule is this, and may easilie be gathered of that which is said.

All things whatsoeuer offer or present themselves vnto vs to be done or suffered, admitted or reiected, be they corporall or spirituall are of three sorts, namely commaunded, forbidden, or indifferent, and neither commaunded nor forbidden; and nothing can come or happen but is contained in one of these three kinde.

I.
Of things
comma-
ded.

As touching the first kinde, if the thing be commaunded, the vwill of God is knowne (to weet) that wee doe it: wee must therefore doe

it and that according to the aboue said general rule (to weet) only because God will haue it so, and for no other end whatsoeuer.

For the second sort, if the thing be forbidden, the *vwill of God* is likewise knowne that wee doe it not; and therefore wee must reiect it and leaue it vndone, and this for the same only intention of Gods *vwill* all other intentions reiected, and as much as is possible forgotten. 2.

As concerning the third, namely of things indifferent; they are of three sorts (to weet) agreeable to nature or sensualitie, as hearing, curious talke or newes, viewing the beautie of some person, stately buildings, and such like; or contrarie to nature and sensualitie, as keeping silence, geuing almes, fasting not commanded &c; or indifferent to nature and sensualitie, as to goe this way or another, to sitt or to walke, or finally, whatsoeuer hee findeth no more inclination to doe then to leaue vndone. If the thing offered or that presenteth it self be of the first kinde, according to sensualitie or affection; the *vwill of God* is, that wee refuse and reiect it: if it bee of the second, repugnant to sensualitie or affection; the *vwill of God* is, that wee accept it: both which are Propositions manifest by the scripture, euery leafe wherof almost doth exhorthe vs to mortification of the old man, as *Mortificate membra vestra quae sunt super terram*, Mortifie your members that are 3.

Of things indifferent.

Rom. 8.

When
the thing
is difficile
what is
to be do-
ne.

on the earth , and, *Si autem spiritu facta carnis mortificaueritis , uiuetis*, If by the spirit yow mortifie the acts of the flesh yow shall liue, yet with this exception, if true and vnfained discretion require not the contrarie , hauing respect to health, person, qualitie , tyme , and place , with other like circumstances ; but if such be the circumstances and so indifferent the reasons on both sides , as in veritie a man knoweth not which to doe or choose , either to doe or leaue vndone, to resist or admit the thing, then must hee dispatche and choose the one or the other, allwayes with the intention aboue said of the *vvill of God*, rather then with distraction, and breaking his braines, and losse of tyme, make too long discusion ; except (which happeneth seldom) the matter bee of such consequence that it deserueth it , in which case hee must vse prayer and counsaile of godly men , and such as are of mature iudgement.

When
the mat-
ter is of
importan-
ce.

If the thing be of the third kind , namely indifferent, neither according nor yet against sensualitie to doe or to leaue vndone ; a man may choose which side hee will, alwayes with this intention of the *vvill of God*, and sayeng in his heart and mynd vnto him selfe ; I will doe or accept, or I will not doe or reiect this for thy will and pleasure ; which doing, the thing that so hee shall leaue or doe with this intention, shalbe as well the *vvill of God* as if it

had bein commaunded or forbidden: the reason is, because the worke followeth the intention; so that such things not commaunded or forbidden but in them selves indifferent, are made good or bad by their good or bad intention.

For better intelligence wherof must be vnderstood, that as all the fruit of the tree as well little as great appertaineth to him that is master therof; so all the fruits of works, words, and thoughts of a man appertain vnto his Lord and God; and by consequence hee ought to doe nothing be it neuer so little, either in accepting or reiecting, consenting or resisting, doing or suffering, but for him and his glorie, the Apostle sayeng, *Quodcumque facitis in verbo aut in opere, omnia in nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi facite*, VVhatsoever yow doe either in word or worke, doe it all in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ. Coloss. 3.

Further, though ail our life must be for God, yet all our life is not limited; though all our works must be for him either in doing or suffering, accepting or reiecting, consenting or resisting, yet hath hee not limited all, nor commaunded which wee shall accept or reiect, resist or consent vnto, but hath left the most parte of our life and works in our owne choise, to doe or to leaue vndone, accept or reiect without any synne; namely, all those things of this classe or order which heer wee

call indifferent, as being free from commaundement or prohibition. Heervpon then, this our purpose is easilie proued (to weet) that by such intention these works indifferent are the *vwill* of God.

I.
*Argu-
ment.*

For, whatsoeuer God will haue vs knowe and doe, hee giueth vs meanes to knowe and doe the same; but in all these things indifferent hee will haue vs knowe and doe his will as by the Apostle alleaged appeareth, and hath giuen no other meanes to knowe and doe the same but by our application of intention, seing they are not commaunded or prohibited by any lawe; therefore this application of intention in such things is the meanes to knowe and doe the *vwill* of God.

2.

Moreouer, hee doth the *vwill* of God whoe exhibiteth vnto him his honor in the best manner possible; but in all these things indifferent there is no better maner to exhibite his honor vnto him the by applicatiō of intentiō; therefore hee that in these things indifferent will vse such application of intention to God, shall (doubtles) execute his will.

3.

Also, in all works that bee lawfull, such is the worke exterior as God seeth to be the heart and intention interior; but God seeth in these indifferent things which be lawfull, the heart interior thus directed to be according to his will; therefore the worke exterior is likewise according to his will.

4.

Likewise, when in doing any thing the *vwill*

of God and ours pretend one end, the worke is done for the same end ; but in doing these things indifferent the *vwill of God* pretendeth his honor (as is proued) and by application of intentiō our will pretēdsalso the same; therfor in doing such things indifferent with such application of intention they are the *vwill of God*.

Also, those things are the *vwill of God* which are don according as he demandeth of vs; but God demaunds of vs that these things indifferent be done for his honor (as is proued by the Apostle) and by such applicatiō of intentiō to God wee doe thē for his honor; therefore whē wee doe these things indifferent with applicatiō of intentiō to God, they are the *vwill of God*.

Againe, those things are the *vwill of God* in which Gods intention and mans are but one; but in these things indifferent done with rectificatiō of intention Gods intention and ours are but one (to weet, his glorie) therefore when in these things indifferent wee haue this rectification of intention, they are the *vwill of God*.

It is then plaine that these works indifferent done with this end and intentiō are aswell the *vwill of God* as the things that wee doe because they are commaunded, or reiect because they are forbidden, though in those our intention must follow the worke, but in these the worke our intentiō; for in things cōmaunded or forbiddē, our intentiō must bee cōformed to the work which the law hath limited, but in things indifferent the work must be cōformed to our

intention which the lawe hath left at libertie.
On which point I haue bein somewhat the
longer, for that I haue knowne some which
doubted in the practise therof.

By this therefore yow see the rule of things
commaunded, forbidden, and indifferent,
which are the three mysticall dayes of which
Exod. 3. is said, *Iter trium dierum ibimus in desertum, & sa-*
cificabimus domino, V Vee will goe three dayes
iourney in the desert, and offer sacrifice vn-
to our Lord. For, what is this iourney els
then the *v*vill of God by which a man trauai-
leth toward Paradise and discouereth the life
Psal. 49. eternall, as is said? *Illic iter quò ostendam illi sa-*
lutare Dei, Thear is the iourney wher I will
shewe him the saluation of God: and what
may be these three dayes of this iourney but
these three points wherin the *v*vill of God is
fownd? and worthily they are called (dayes)
for the great light which they bring. This de-
sert is the penitent life, or voyage of the *v*vill
of God in the light of these three dayes as it is
written; *Psal. 88.* *Domine, in lumine vultus tui ambulabunt,*
& in virtute tua exultabunt tota die, O Lord, in
the light of thy face they will walke, and in
thy vertue they will exult all day long: and
during these three dayes, and by these three
things is offered (as is commaunded) self will
by mortification of the same, of which sacri-
Psal. 50. *ficiu* it is said, *Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribula-*
tus, The afflicted spirit is to God a sacrifice,

which is more pleasing vnto him, yea then the sacrifices of beasts; for (sayth S. Gregorie) *In sacrificijs aliena caro, in obedientia autem propria voluntas mactatur*, By sacrifices is offered the flesh of beasts, but by obedience selfwill is killed.

Exceptions from this rule, and solutions of certaine obiections touching things commaunded, forbidaen, and indifferent.

CHAP. VII.

IF one aske touching these things indifferent in respect of the lawe I. Doubt, and the solution. yet not in respect of sensualitie, but are agreeable therunto, whither one may not choose the side which is according to sensualitie, and so reiect that which is bitter, and admitt that which is pleasant; I answer, if it be by true discretion, as for health or otherwise, then it is no question but hee may (as alreadie is said) but without such iust occasion, though it be possible to doe it for the *vwill of God*, yet is it impossible to doe it only and purely for the *vwill of God*, without some mixture of affection or sensualitie; and so to doe is verie dangerous. I say (it is dan-

gerous) aswell because in so choosng that side which pleaseth sensualitie, hee doth not mortifie the same as hee ought ; as also because it is to be feared that in so doing hee deceiveth himself, doing the thing either wholie or partly to please sensualitie , though hee both say and thinke to doe it for *Gods v*vill. I say it also (impossible) to doe it simplie and purely for God , especially when deliberatly and of sett purpose hee so chooseth according to sensualitie ; because no reason can moue him so to choole : for seing a man ought allwayes to bend to mortification , what reason is thear why hee should willingly , wittingly, and deliberatly, without any respect of health or other matter of discretion choose the things delightfull to sensualitie ? and so doing it not according to the true light of reason , it is impossible that his intention should bee pure and only for God , without some mixture of sensualitie or self loue , though more or lesse according as the person is more or lesse imperfect : yet if it be done by surprise, suddainly, or for want of taking heed, it may be done for the only *v*vill of God ; namely if remembering himself, hee therunto purely and wholly addresse and leuell his intention.

2.
Doubt,
and the solution.

As for the things commaunded which seeme agreable to nature and sensualitie, as to eat or drinke, play or recreat himself , walke or visit some place or person wherein he taketh

pleasure and contentment; as likewise for the things forbidden disagreeable to sensualitie and affection, as to leaue of fasting, working, discipline, or any other painfull, bitter, difficile, or vnpleasant thing, a man must fortifie and strengthen his intention, least it be ouerthrowne or wounded and weakned by the force of sensualitie, or the impulsion of vnbridled affection; which hee must doe by producing contrarie acts, namely, by casting of and turning away his mind from the contentmēt and pleasure of such a thing, and stopping all his spirituall powres and vnderstanding against the sensualitie therof; and contrarywise by fixing his heart and mind and all his powers on God, and so offer himself vnto him as his vessell or instrument, wherby hee may doe that work only for his honor and will, without any pleasure or proper cōmoditie of this his creature; and so doing it cometh to passe in those that vse it, that wheras before the soule tooke her repose and delight rather in the sensualitie and contentment of such a thing, then in the *vwill of God*, after such a spiritual act, shee taketh her whole ioy and delight in the only *vwill of God*.

But some will demaund, if after such diligēce hee findeth still himself drawne and allured by sensualitie or affection, what is to be done.

3.
Doubt.

A man must proceed in another manner vsing more subtiltie, and making of necessitie a vertue in accepting the same sensualitie or

Solution.

affection (which hee can not be rid of) together with such a worke euen at the hands of God as his will ; not as a pleasure but as a paine , not as sensualitie but as the crosse of *Christ*, as in verie deed to such a soule it is.

For better intelligence wherof, because this point is of great consequence , as being euen the verie knott of the spiritual life; and because it is a block wherat many stumble , and a ditch which almost all fall into, not knowing how to behaue themselves in this battaile , I will say somewhat farther therof.

Note
vwill.

V Vee must then knowe and remember, that thear be twoe partes of our soule, sensible or sensitiue ; and spirituall or reasonable; wherof the one is allwayes contrarie to the other and haue their contrarie desirs; the sensible part desiring sensible things against the spirit , and contrariwise the spirituall part spirituall things against the sensible, as sayth

Galat. 5. S. Paule, *Spiritus concupiscit aduersus carnem, caro autem aduersus spiritum* , The spirit coueteth against the flesh , and the flesh against the spirit. Moreouer , that the one of these partes , namely the spirituall , is allwayes in our power to make it subiect to God and his lawe, because of her free will which is naturall, and grace which is allwayes readie : but the part which is sensible is not so allwayes subiect , nor in our power to make it obey God, and followe that which is good, but of-

ten resisteth the good which by our reason wee would doe, and followeth the euill which wee would not doe; wherfore S. Paule sayth *Rom. 7.* heereof, *Non quod volo bonum hoc facio, sed quod nolo malū hoc ago*, I doe not the good which I would, but the euill which I would not, that doe I.

Further, because God is not vniust, tyrannicall, and cruell, but contrariewise iust, sweet and mercifull, hee hath not commaunded vs things vnpossible and aboue our power, or imposed a burthen heauie to be caried, but contrariewise hath commaunded that which is easie, as is said, *Mādata eius non sunt graua*, His *I. Ioan. 5.* commaundements are not heauie, And *Iugum* *Matt. 11.* *meum suaue est, & onus meum leue*, My yoake is sweet, and my burthen light. And therefore by consequence though hee hath commaunded vs to keepe this spirituall part wholly subiect to his lawe being (as is sayd) a thing possible, yet hah hee not commaunded so to keepe subiect the sensible, being (as is shewed) a thing impossible, but only to keepe it so much subiect as wee can, by due mortification and by the rule of reason: wherfore this rebellion of the inferior part is neuer any synne so long as the superior part doth her indeuor, and be the rebellion neuer so vnreasonable, if it preuaile not against reason, it shall neuer be imputed to the partie reasonable, but contra- *2. Tim. 2.* rywise it shalbe crowned, as hauing lawfully fought. V W h e r e f o r e w h e n i n t h e s e t h i n g s

Great cō-
fort for
she temp-
ted.

Rom. 7.

Iob. 7.

4.
Doubt.

cōmaunded or in any other done by true dis-
cussiō, a man feeleth any delight or sensualitie
little or great against reaso and this puritie of
intentiō of Gods vwill, and hauing resisted in
bringing forth contrarie interior acts, and yet
such motion or rebellion remaineth, he ought
not to dispaire or loose courage as many doe
thinking that all is lost, and that hee is not able
to resist sufficiently; but (as is said) hee ought
with courage to perseuer, assuring himself that
hee shall not be ouercome except hee will
himself by consent of the partie superior and
spirituall. Therefore (as is aboue said) let him
take and accept such an interior battaile as frō
the hand of God (that is) as his will, and as the
crosse of Christ, knowing that his crosse cometh
not only by exterior iniuries (as many thinke)
but also by interior warrs as heer is seene, and
as hee knewe fullwell which said, *Video autem
aliam legem in membris meis repugnantē legi mētis
meae, & captiuantē me in legem peccati*, I perceiue
another lawe within mee repugnant to the
lawe of my mind, and drawing mee to the law
of synne; and likewise hee which said, *Factus
sum mihi met ipsi grauis*, I am made burthen som
vnto my self.

But heer againe in this conflict against car-
nall and sensuall motions thear seemeth yet an
other doubt and obscuritie to be brought to
light; which is, that though by this which is
said a man may know that if the partie supe-

rior consent not but doe her endeavour, the rebellion or motion of the partie inferior can neuer hurt him, yet knoweth hee not some tymes when it is so, and when not. For, so great is the motion sensuall or carnall that often tymes it so troubleth reason, and obscureth the light and serenitie of the spirituall part, that shee is not able to iudge whether shee hath consented or not.

I answer, that neither is it necessarie that wee know it assuredly, but only probably, for the better preseruatiō of humilitie: for if wee

Solution.

knewe assuredly that wee had ouercome it, wee should be in more danger to fall by pride then before by the fight, and were like by elatiō of mynd to loose more in peace then by valiant fight wee had gained in warre: but yet may wee know it as much as is for our good, and as much as God seeth to be healthfull for vs, namely by coniecture and probabilitie; which knowledge and assurance cometh two wayes; first, if hee haue this firme purpose and general resolutiō habitualy, neuer at any tyme to cōmitt mortall synne; secōdly, if in his cōscience hee thinke that hee neuer gaue ouer the fight but still resisted, though this resistāce seemed not so strong; for though it seemed weake, this weaknes might come of twoe causes; first, for want of good will to resist, and then it is in deed such as it seemeth, namely weake; and so is very like to haue offended. Secondly, this weaknes may come

How to know yf a mā haue consented.

Twoe causes of weaknes.

by reason of the impulsion of the temptation causing great feeling and delectation in the inferior parte drowning (as it were) the sensible feeling and knowledge of resistance, and good will; which notwithstanding liueth and keepeth entire in the superior parte, and then this want of resistance is not such as it seemeth, but is in deed verie great, and so hee offendeth not.

5.
Doubt.
Resolutio.

But how shall I knowe (say yow) of which of these twoe causes this feeble resistance cometh? I aunswer, by the aboue said habituall and continuall firme purpose and resolution neuer to commit synne; for if hee be not accustomed to haue this purpose, hee may know when hee feeleth none or almost no will to resist the temptation, that hee hath none in deed; but if hee haue this generall purpose hee may verily thinke that hee hath resisted and kept pure his spirit and the powers therof, though like the three children in the glowing fornace, flaming with the fire of concupiscēce so heated by *Nabuchodonosor* the diuell, king of all *Babylon* and confusion.

Dan.3.

Moreouer, it must heer be noted that when wee speake of things commaunded or forbidden, wee intend not only the great things which were mortall synne to commit them or to leaue them vndone, but also little matters which being commaunded were veniall synne or imperfection to omit, or being for-

forbidden were the like to committ, for heer
 wee treat not only of the obseruing of Gods
 commandements, but principally of the way
 to perfection, which consisteth in auoyding of
 imperfections: and heer also must alwayes be
 remembred that (as is aboue said) by this word
 (lawe or commaundement) I meane not only
 the lawe of God and of his church, but of supe-
 riors spirituall and tēporall, as likewise of the
 order, state, and condition of euery one, and
 finally of the commaundement or intention
 (not contrarie to God) of father, mother, or
 any other to whom wee are bownd to obay;
 so that whenas by any of these kind of lawes,
 commaundements, or intentions wee ought
 to doe or leaue vndone any thing, hee should
 much deceiue himselfe which should doe the
 contrarie be the thing neuer so small, though
 vnder pretext of perfection or cōtemplation,
 because (as is written) *Melior est obedientia quam* 1. Reg. ii.
victimæ, Obedience is better then sacrifices.
 And whoesoever should so doe willingly and
 wittingly, ordinarily is in great dāger through
 inobedience by little and little to fall into
 some great error and ruine of his soule; and al-
 so if hee were of any particular order of Reli-
 gion, by such leauing of little customs and
 ceremonies, to help (for his part) to ruinate
 his Order fenced in and defended with such
 customs as a gardin with a hedge. VVherfore,
 I wish him to heare what Ecclesiastes sayth vnto

Ecc. 10. him, *Qui dissipat sepem, mordebit eum coluber*, Hee which pulleth downe the hedge, the Inake will bite him; and to receiue this admonition

Prou. 28. from the wise man, *Ne transgrediaris terminos antiquos quos posuerunt Patres tui*, Passe not the ancient bownds which thy fathers haue putt before thee. For, how can that tend to perfection that nourisheth proper will, and lea- ueth of obedience? or how can that tend to perfection that diminisheth true perfor- mance of profession? But what more dimi- nisheth true performance of his profession then to abandon the good customs and con- stitutions of his Religion, which though they be not the essentiall or verie substance thros, yet are they the wall, trenche, or bulwarke

Similie. to defend the same? For as no Captaine of a castle or Gouvernour of a towne is so foo- lish as to beat downe the walles or bull- warks, or to fill vp the trenches or dit- ches of the same which defendeth the towne, and maketh the enemy employ his forces and spend his munition, shott, and powder to win the same, and to beate them downe before hee can assalt the castle or towne it selfe: so is hee no wiser who beateth downe and abolisheth such ceremo- nies and customes which keepe in safetie the essentiall of his Rule (namely his three vowes and other things commaunded vn- der paine of synne) and which make the

spirituall enemies to spend their forces in expugning the same before they can come to that which is of greater consequence. For, as when such defences of the towne be destroyed, the enemy layeng his seige against it forthwith planteth his Canons and beateth at his will and pleasure against the very howses of the same euen vnto the heart therof, and so it is in great danger to be taken and subdued: in like manner when such ceremonies be abrogated, the enemy beseiging the cittie of the soule, without any lett layeth on his whole forces, and with his fierie arrowes shooteth full butt against the naked essentiall poynts and vndefended vowes of his professiō; so that hee ought to be so far from such contempt of those things, that though he were in great sublime contemplation, yet if hee knew that such things were to be done, hee ought for the causes aboue said to leaue the same.

But heerein lieth the sore and imperfection in this case, that they thinke they should be farther frō God, and diminishe their spirituall light whiles they are employed in the accomplishment of such little things and ceremonies; so that they doe not only omit them by frailtie, but also wittinglie and of sett purpose. But if so it be that by these meanes they be sequestered from God, and their light decreased, it is either because they doe it vnwillinglie,

namely exteriorlie, and not in mynd ; which in effect before God whose regardeth the will, is as much as to leaue it vndone : or els if they doe it willinglie, it is not (as heer is taught) for the vwill of God only ; for if this were their end, so far should they be from being alienated from God, and their light diminished, that they should therby be neerer vnto him , and their light much encreased ; because this will (which is spirit and life) doth illuminate, illustrate , and so change the works , that of corporall they become spirituall, of darke and exterior, cleere and interior ; and therefore of

Psal. 38. those that so doe them it is written, *Quia tenebra non obscurabuntur a te , & nox sicut dies illuminabitur ; sicut tenebra eius ita & lumen eius* , Darknes shall not be hidden to thee, and the night shall shine as the day; the light and the darknes

Abac. 3. shall bee alike: and *Egredietur diabolus ante pedes eius*, The diuell shall goe foorth before his feet as being troden vnder the same by such obe-

Ibid. dience, *Ante faciem eius ibit mors* , Death shall goe before his face , as being beaten away by the life (which is this will) and by the great light wherewith hee is cloathed, and life wherewith his spirit is filled. And this is the true actiue and contemplatiue life (to weet) not separated (as many take it) but ioined together, making of works exterior, interior of temporall, spirituall; of obscure, illuminated ; and finally, which so ioineth in one and

the same worke contemplation with the action, and that without preiudice or hindrance one of another, wherof wee will speake more amply in her due place.

How six degrees are contained in this Intention, that sayth; I will doe this for the only will of God. Of the first degree.

CHAP. VIII.

THIS rule therefore thus obserued of things commaunded, forbidden, and indifferent, with those other obseruations therunto adioyned, the will of God shall euery whear in all things appeare most plainly; and so it resteth that wee doe the same by the practise of the aboue said generall rule in the third chapter expressed; namely, that wee doe all things for this end of the will of God, and neuer begin any worke, whether it be exterior or interior, corporall or spirituall, in repelling vice or acquiring vertue; be it a thing commaunded, forbidden, or indifferēt, be it naturall or supernaturall, little or greate, finally be it whatsoever; wee neuer (I say) begin to doe it till wee haue first addressed our intention vnto

God, sayeng by word and thought, or at least by thought from the bottome of our heart: O Lord, I will doe this or I will suffer, I will resist or will pursue &c. this thing only for thy will and pleasure.

But that the puritie and perfection of this intention may be the better vnderstood, and the deuout soule may more cleerly discerne, and more easily expell all impuritie, which no lesse secretly then commonly doth contaminate the same, wee will declare it more plainly.

This intention therfore which saith, I will doe or suffer this or that only for the vwill of God, containeth six degrees or perfections (to weet) *Actually, Onely, VVillingly, Cleerly, Assuredly, Speedily.*

And this intention with these six degrees, hath bein figured by the six degrees of Salomons
 3. Reg. c. 10. Throne in these words; King Salomon built a Throne of Iuory, and couered it vvith shining gold, vvhich had six degrees, and the topp therof vvvas rovvnd in the hinder part, and tvvove handles on each side vpholding the seat, and on each handle tvvove lyons, and on each side of the degrees tvvelue little lyons: such a vvorke vvvas not to be fovvnd in anykingdome, This king Salomon is Iesus Christ, whoe worthily may attribute vnto himselfe this name Salomō, which signifieth (peaceable) seing hee bringeth peace to the soule wherin
 psal. 75. hee maketh his abroad, for *Factus est in pace locus*

eias, His dwelling is in peace. Now, in the soule as in his pallace hee hath made a throne of white Iuory of (pure intention and diuine will) large, to be capable of his diuine maiestie, garnishing it with fine gold of (perfect charitie) This throne hath the six foresaid degrees, of which wee are to treat. The topp of this Throne or (compleat perfection of intention) is rownd without end or limit (to weet) Perpetuall in the hinder part, which looketh towards the other world and life eternall : for though the fore parte of the Intention which regardeth vs hath a beginning, yet that which is behind hidden from vs which looketh towards God and eternitie shall neuer haue end, for *Charitas non excidit*, Charitie 1. Cor. 13 hath no fall. But which is the seate of this thone wherein God repositeth himself, if not (constant perseuerance?) of which seate is said, *Sedes tua Deus in saculum seculi*, Thy seat Psal. 44. (ô God) remaineth for euer. The twoe handles which vphold the seate, are the twoe parts of strength, which are (according to S. Thomas) *Aggredi* and *Sustinere*, To vndertake 2. 2. q. 128 and sustaine, or, to doe and suffer; which handles firmly support this seate of (Perseuerance) not permitting it to fall. One was at the one end, to weet (to Vndertake) at the beginning ; the other at the other end, to weet (to Sustaine) at the end. The

fower Lyons are the fower Cardinall vertues,
 or rather the fowre principall partes of the
 soule, the vnderstanding, the will, the powers
 irascible and concupiscible: the twelue little
 Lyons are the eleuen Passions of the mind
 with Discretion which doth tame them, and
 of Lyons and furious beasts make them do-
 mesticall and seruiceable. They were vpon
 the degrees, because (being well gouerned)
 they maintaine and preferue them. They were
 six on each side, because six of these passions
 haue their residence in the Concupiscible
 powre, and six in the Irascible, placing thear
 Discretion. Loe then this mysticall throne: O
 glorious thone! ô maiesticall seate! ô sublime
 intention! ô diuine worke of great Salomon!
 It is not without good reason said of thee,
 that no kingdome can afford they like; ô
 throne which beautifieth the soule geuing her
 to vnderstand this sweet inuitation of God
 sayeng, *Veni (electa mea) & ponam in te thronum
 meum*, Come (my elect) and I will place
 my throne in thee. Oh holie intention and
 throne of God, whear hee sitteth to renue in
 the soule all things therin contained, accor-
 ding as is written, *Dixit qui sedebat in throno;*
Ecce noua facio omnia, Hee whoe sate in the
 throne, sayd, Behold, I make all things new.
 Lett vs consider therefore the compleat per-
 fection of this throne, ascending by order
 the degrees therof.

The first wherof is *Actually*, by which is *Actually*,
meant an actuall remembrance of this *vill* of ^{1. degree.}

God, which consisteth in lifting vp our mynd
to the same, and rectifieng our intention ac-
cording therunto: by which degree of (Re-
membrance) is excluded all obliuion of this *Faultes*
will, whensoever wee begin any thing spiri- *against*
tuall or corporall; which is a common fault, *this de-*
causing an infinit losse, and depriuing vs of an *gree.*
vnspeakable treasure of the light of grace, and
of an vnknowne waight of merit. Yet to es-
chew this extremitie of Obliuion, a man must
not fall into the contrarie excesse of ouer-
much Remembrance, in multiplyeng so many
acts, and rectifieng so often his intention as to
trouble the braine. And therefore when I
say that a man must direct his intention in
all works, I meane not of euery little action
done by euery part and sence of the body or
power, of the soule, but of such works as are
distinguished and separated in them selves; but
particularly and aboue all, wee must not for-
get those which wee feele to please or dis-
please nature very much; for it is thear (as
they say) whear the Hare goeth away, and
wherin consisteth true aduancement.

Note also, that though allwayes hee ought
so to direct his intention whensoever hee be-
ginneeth to doe or suffer any thing, sayeng, I
will doe or suffer this (oh Lórd) for thy will;
this is to be vnderstood of all those tymes

when hee is distracted, and thinketh not already of the same will, nor hath his spirit lifted vp to God ; and not when hee hath it so eleuated as it may happen, especially if hee be diligent, and the worke be shorte and not distractiue of it self. For if after such direction of intention at the beginning hee be diligent in turning away his mind togeather with his eyes and other senses from all exterior things, and fixing his spirit in this will and diuine pleasure, and be attētiue only vnto God, hee may still remaine vnited vnto him, vntill hee take in hand some other thing. Likewise, the worke being soone done, or els being not distractiue, but rather drawing the soule to deuotion and towards God, as in singing hymnes or diuine seruice ; a man may haue his mind still lifted vp, which if so it be, I say not that hee direct a new his intention taking in hand a new thing, but that hee so still remaine with his mind so eleuated vnto God: for if hee doe otherwise, hee should rather descend lower then be raised higher, though (perhaps) this case falleth not out often, but that hee hath his mind distracted and the intention crooked, or at least not so vpright but that the mind may be more recollected, and the intention more rectified. Neuerthelesse, a man must not be scrupulous if hee faile in this degree and some others, as though hee had committed

some synne, seing the desire hee hath to practise this Rule doth add no new obligation.

Of the second degree of perfect
Intention.

CHAP. IX.

THE second degree of this mysti- *Only. 2.*
call Throne of pure intention and *degree.*
diuine will is *Only* (that is) that
this will be theyr only, simple,
and alone the end which moueth the mind
to doe or suffer the thing. VVhich degree *Faultes*
excludeth all other ends and intentions *against*
whatsoever; and first the euill and malicious *this de-*
intentions as to doe the thing for pride, *gree.*
enuie, couetousnes, gluttonie &c. Secondy,
all imperfect end and intentions, as to
doe the thing for humaine respect, fauor of
men, self loue, proper complacence, seruile
feare, sensualitie, particular profit, and the
like; and (in somme) all veniall synnes, and
whatsoever is absolutlie of her owne nature
imperfection. Finally, heerby is excluded not
only the euill intētion, and that which is of it

owne nature imperfect, but also that which is of her nature good, but comparatiuely bad, namely compared with a better, as to doe penance, discipline, fast, to eschew the paines of hell, to merit to be rewarded, to goe to heauen, and the like; which intentions though they be good in them selves, yet are they not so, compared with the only *vwill of God* which is farr better (as hath bein shewed) and are therefore heer excluded.

VVherfore this degree and perfection especially appertaineth and is referred to the mortification of all our passions and affections, selfe loue, vntemperate desires, and all other imperfections; all which as bad weedes springing vp in the fertile grownd of our good works, are rooted out with this fitt instrument or degree of (*Onely*) and as crooked boughes shooting out of the straight tree of our intention, are cutt of with the sharpe sword of the *onely vwill of God*; the same being (as is said) a right rule to measure whether the line of our intention be drawne straight or no.

VVherfore let the deuout Reader take this for a generall and infallible Rule, that whensoever in his worke he hath not this sole intention and *onely vwill of God* for his end without any mixture of other intention whatsoever, it hath in it imperfection be it neuer so secretly hidden, yea from the partie him-

self; but as soone as this only will beareth sway
and taketh entire possession of the heart, all
darknes is discovered by the light therof, and
all obscuritie of imperfection is cast out by
the shining brightnes of the same. Oh how
often are wee deceiued for want of this light!
how straight thinke wee to be our intention!
how holie our desire! how excellent our
worke! how good an opinion haue wee of
our selves! but as soone as this light cometh,
downe must goe the Peacocks feathers seing
now her fowle feet so soyled, and loaden with
earthly affections, durtie passions, muddie
proprietie, and swinish self loue; for so soone
as this right Rule of Gods vwill is applied vn-
to our intention, wee see the crookednes of
intemperance and disordinate desire therof. All
the world goeth awry, because they will not
by this Rule square their intentions, nor by
this light examin their actions. In this point
therefore let the deuout person labour, heerin
let his whole studdie be, in this worke let
him recollect and employ all his forces, name-
ly in thus examining his intention in all his
affaires, for heerin consisteth all true spiri-
tuall profit; this is the infallible fowndation
in the beginning, the secure way in procee-
ding, and the consummated perfection in the
end of all the Actiue life.

The third degree of perfect Intention.

CHAP. X.

Vvillingly, 3. Degree.



Psal. 75.

THE third degree of this Throne is, that this intention be *vvillingly* (that is) that the work be done not only for Gods only will, but also willingly, and with full consent, with a certaine repose, peace, tranquillitie, and spirituall contentment therein, that the soule may be made capable of the presence of God and influence of his holie spirit, *Quia factus est in pace locus eius*, His place and abode is in peace (that is) in the soule not disquieted with the noise of troublesome affections and contradicting passions, nor with the tract of contrarie desires drawing her another way.

Faultes against this degree.

By this degree therefore of *vvillingnesse* and contentment, is excluded and shutt out all sadnesse, heauinesse, and vnwillingnesse in doing, leauing vndone, or suffering any thing commaunded by any of the lawes aboue said, of what cause soeuer such vnwillingnesse proceed.

The first kind of contra-

Farther, this vnwillingnesse and contradiction may spring of diuers causes, and namely of the thing commaunded, as when it is base, abiect, and vile, as to visit priz

sons to attend the sicke, or doe the offices of the house: also when the thing is vnpleasant, sharpe, and bitter, as discipline, abstinence, or fasting: likewise when it is against our profit, as restitution, hospitalitie, or almesdeeds; and finally, when it is against our worldly honor, as to support patiently euill, spightfull, or slanderous words, reproches, and all kind of iniuries.

*distinction in
doing the
vill of
God.*

Againe, this Vnwillingnesse may come by occasion of the partie that commaundeth, as because hee is, or is thought to be simple, poore, or vnlearned; or that hee is his enemy or at least not his freind, or hath done or spoken somewhat vnkindly to him.

2.

Likewise it may come in respect of the tyme when hee should doe the thing, as when hee is commaunded to doe it when hee would rest, take his refection, recreation, or doe some other thing of his owne; or when contrariwise hee hath a mind to doe it and is commaunded to repose, eate, or rest from labour, or should doe some other particular thing then that.

3.

Also, this Vnwillingnesse may come in respect of the maner of the worke, as when it must be done speedily, laboriously, and diligently; or meekly, humbly, and to his owne confusion and to the abating of his pride.

4.

Finally, it may happen in respect of the place, as when it is publicke, vnplea-

5.

fant, loathsome. By all these occasions (I say) with the like, this sadnes creepeth into the worke when wee doe the same, though they all spring of one only cause, namely proper will; and must be removed and cast out by this degree of (willingnesse and contentment) remembring that such is the pleasure and will of that soueraigne will whoe for his owne delight and seruice created ours.

The 2.
kinde of
cōtradiction.

Moreouer, there is an other kind of unwillingnesse in doing the vwill of God which is more secret, and proceedeth of causes lesse known, but no lesse contrarie to the same vwill of God and degree of (willingnesse) and these causes are commonly couered with pretence of pietie, as of prayer, fasting, teaching, studying, preaching, and the like; so that many when by their superior they are commanded any thing which may interrupt their exercise, they doe it not willingly but vnwillingly and with sadnesse, proper will perswading them that they were better occupied before, and blinding them so, that they can not see how much *Obedientia melior est quam victima*, Obedience is better then sacrifices; nor knowe, that though in themselves such works be good, yet are they nought worth, done against the vwill of God manifested vnto vs by his lawe, and the commaunding or knowne intention of the lawfull superior, namely, so long as hee commaundeth not against the fa-

me lawe.

A third kinde of vnwillingnesse ariseth *The 3.
kind of
contradiction.* from another cause yet more secret and vn-
knowne; namely, when a man knoweth that
it is the *vwill of God*, and also willingly taketh
it in hand, but vnwillingly bestoweth his spi-
rit, his endeuour, and tyme vpon it to doe it
well and faythfully, but turning his mind
from the same, casteth it on God and his will,
and so neglecteth the worke, making it not so
perfect as hee ought; which is a notable and
most secret deceit; for, casting so his mind
from the worke to the *vwill of God*, hee diui-
deth the said worke and will which are but
one, making the worke one thing and the
will another: and so when hee seeketh God
but of the worke, hee seeketh him out of his
will; and turning from the worke, hee turneth
from his will, casting of his mind from the
worke hee casteth it from his will, and (fi-
nally) going out of his worke hee goeth out of
his will and pleasure, because the worke is his
will; and though still hee doth the worke,
yet if it be not willingly, hee doth it not be-
fore God, whose seeth the heart, and iudgeth
according to the will: and therefore how much
the more hee so seeketh God, so much the
lesse doth hee find him, because God is neuer
fownd by doing against his diuine will; but
the more vnwillingly hee doth that which
hee commaundeth, and the more hee turneth

his interior eyes from it as being wearie thereof, the more doth hee against his will, and by consequence the lesse hee findeth him. But God is fownd only by his will (that is) by doing that which hee commaundeth; in his will, which is his worke; by meanes of his will, which is by meanes of doing the thing which hee willeth, and that willingly and with all our heart and all our strength, as wee are bownd to serue him with all our heart and our strength, not with slownes or fastidiousnesse, for *Maledictus homo qui facit opus Dei negligenter*, Accursed is that man whoe doth the worke of God negligently; nor yet sadly, or (as it were) by constraint, for *Non ex tristitia aut necessitate*, Not with sadnesse or necessitie, but willingly and with contentment, *Hilarem enim datorē diligit Deus*, For God loueth a ioyfull giuer; but (as is said) hee doth not ioyfully the worke, whoe in doing it, vnwillingly thinketh thereof: Hee doth not (I say) willingly the vwill of God whoe doing the worke will not thinke thereof, but only of his will, as though his worke were not his will, or as if his will were other then his worke; fynally, as though his worke and his will were not one and the self same thing: so that when to thinke of the will hee will not thinke of the worke, hee thinketh indeed neither of the worke nor of the

Hier. 48.

2. Cor. 9.

Ibid.

will; and the soule that will be so out of the worke to be in God, is neither in deed in God, nor yet in his worke.

Let vs therefore lay downe heer for a sure grownd to build vpon, for an infallible Maxime to resolute this matter, and for a shining light to dissipate and dissolue this cloud (namely) that when any worke presenteth it selfe to be done, following the Rules aboue said, the same verie worke it self, be it corporall or spirituall, inasmuch as it appertaineth to mee, is the verie *vill of God*, and to mee is spirit and life.

I say (the verie worke it selfe) to signifie the thing done, and to exclude all imaginations of any other thing, either in heauen, or in earth, or in our soule, excepting as that thing it selfe is in our soule. I say (both corporall and spirituall) that none may think the corporall to be lesse then the spirituall; and to touche the deceit and common error heerin of many spirituall men, which doe more willingly the spirituall then the corporall, esteeming the one kind more noble then the other, and deeming to find more life and light in the one then in the other; which though it be true in respect only of themselves, and good so to doe, preferring the one before the other when a man hath libertie to take his choise; yet is it otherwise when

the *v*vill of God interposeth it self by meanes of any obligation or commādemēt; for then it is ill done, and a man deceiueth himself in preferring the spirituall before the corporall, obedience being (as is said) better then sacrifice. I say (in as much as it appertaineth vnto me) to exclude the substance of the thing be it corporall or spirituall substance together also with all her Accidents, as the whitenes, blacknes, and all kind of colours; sweetnesses or bitternes and all kind of tastes; greatness, smallnes and all kind of proportions; and finally, all the qualities and accidents, as not being this *v*vill of God, but as it appertaineth vnto mee (that is) in as much as it ought to be in my soule, as being brought vnto the same by the corporall powers and five sences, *Nihil est enim in Intellectu quod non fuerit prius in Sensu*, There is nothing in the vnderstanding which was not first of all in some of the five Sences; which five Sences bring it into the three powers of the soule, Intelligence, Memorie, and *V*Vill, which keepe, retaine, and (as it were) digest, worke, and metamorphose the same into another forme by taking away the vayle therof, putting of the corporall Image; and so bringing it to a pure abstraction doth lodge it in the essence of the soule: Thus (I say) the worke is in our soule, and thus it appertaineth vnto vs. Taking therefore the worke in this sorte, it is the verie *v*vill of God, and to him

that so doth it spirit and life. For, though there be some darknes by reason of the Image or imagination of the worke in my spirit, yet is the same turned into light by the seruour and light of this diuine will, whereby the soule seeth, nor tasteth ought els but God and his sweet will and pleasure: and how much more willingly the worke is done in this order (to weet) in not diuiding the worke and the will, but esteeming the verie worke to be the verie will, so much the more cleerly doth the soule see this will, and perfectly enioy God; the worke that seemed corporali being so turned wholie into spirituall.

And note, that when I say one must not looke on the *vwill of God* but on the worke, my meaning is (as I haue said) that hee ought not to looke or behold the will a parte, as it is not; but as one and the self same thing with the worke, as it is; nor that hee should turne his spirit and affection from the worke, but contrariwise fix it still in the same, yet alwayes, as in his will.

VVhear is to be noted, that as some are in this extremitie to turne their mind from the worke, and fix it on the *vwill of God*; so are they in farre greater number which leane to the contrarie, turning their mind from the *vwill of God* to fix it on the worke; so that as the one (which be spirituall) find not the *vwill of God* because they seeke it not in his

worke; so the others (which are the worldlings, and vndeuous) doe not the worke of God, because they seeke it not in his will: for, as wee doe but lie to God and in vayne seduce our selves, in thinking to loue his will and yet neglect his worke ; so doe wee no lesse, when wee thinke to doe his worke and yet neglect his will.

It is therefore euident , that to vnite both these extremities, and amend these twoe contrarie imperfections, the *vvill of God* (according to the aboue said Maxime) must be ioyned with his worke , and his worke with his will, and neuer make them twoe, but perfectly one and the self same thing ; acknowledging that the accomplishing of the worke is his verie will , and that his will is the verie accomplishing of the worke , though the reformatiō of this latter imperfection of doing the worke without hauing regard to the *vvill of God* , appertaineth to the first degree of Actuall remembrance.

*Of the fourth degree of perfect
Intention.*

CHAP. XI.

TH E fourth degree of this Throne, *Assured-ly, the fourth degree.*
 or perfection of this intention is, *Certainty, or Assurance,* with which it ought to be munited and fortified, namely, that when one hath directed his intention to doe the worke for the only *vwill of God,* hee assure himself that in veritie it is the *vwill of God.*

By this degree and perfection of Assurance *Faults against this degree.*
 is excluded all doubts and hesitations, which because in this poynt they often intrude them selves, to the great preiudice of the true and faythfull practise therof, I will endeavour to resolue them, by declaring and taking away the causes wherof they spring.

The first cause then, wherof these doubts *The first cause.*
 doe spring, is because in matters indifferent a man knoweth not whether hee hath chosen that side which pleaseth God or not, in doing or leauing vndone any thing; which happeneth because forgetting his rule hee knoweth not how to discerne the matter, taking a wrong meanes of discerning the same (to weete) in wayghing the exterior thing, and considering whether it be more agreeable to God to leaue or doe it, to doe this or to doe that.

For remedy therfore heerof, hee must knowe *Remedy.*
 that this is not the meanes in things indifferent; but must iudge therof by an interior discussiō, and not by the exterior thing, namely, by a view or examen of the intētion; which

if it tend directly to the vwill of God, hee hath in veritie chosen that which is his will; because in such indifferent things the worke followeth the intention, and not the intention the worke.

2.
Cause.

The second doubt is in little matters, and proceeds from the smallnes and little valew therof, perswading some that God esteemeth not such things, sayeng (as it were) in themselves : God careth much for this or that; or, hath God need, or maketh hee accompt of these smalle things?

Remedy.

The remedie wherof is, to remember that as wee must not serue God only with a parte but with all our forces, so must wee not only doe some of our actions but all for him ; and therfore the little aswell as the great. Also, that God measureth the goodnesse of the worke, not by the exterior valew but by the inward intention, and a little thing in our eyes may be great before God : For, like as the garment of russet embroadred with gold and sett with perles, is richer then that of veluet without any ornament; the cloake lined with veluet is more costly then one of taffata lined with searge ; so the least worke exterior with perfect intention, is better then the greatest with an imperfect intentiō. Finally, the remedie of this doubt is, to remember to what the

Sim'lie.

Coloff. 3.

Apostle exhorteth vs sayeng, *Omne quodcunque facitis in verbo aut in opere, omnia in nomine domi-*

ni nostri Iesu Christi facite, All whatsoeuer yow doe or say, doe it in the name of our Lord *Iesus Christ*: for, sayeng that all our workes should be done for God, hee excepteth not the least worke, yea includeth the least word.

And *S. Augustin* to this purpose sayth, Thow doest prayse God when thow doest thy busynesses. *Aug. sup. Psal. 46.*

The third kinde of things wherof these 3. doubts and this hesitation commeth; are *Cause.* things pleasant and sensuall, as eating, drinking, recreations, and the like; because that being so agreeable vnto nature and sensualitie some will thinke (perhaps) that they say not sincerely, but rather faine, and mocke (as it were) God, in sayeng they doe them for his only will and to please him, feeling that it pleaseth theyr nature and sensualitie: which error proceedeth from the euill custome wherunto a man hath giuen himself, to doe such things only by the motion, tract, and impulsion of pleasure and sensualitie, without intention or regard had to the *vwill of God*: for, hauing contracted such a long custome to doe them so, to satisfie theyr insatiable and brutish sensualitie, not lifting vp theyr mind, nor looking vp to God no more then hoggs in the trowgh, they think such things should be no otherwise done, nor that in deed a man hath the power to rectifie the same, and to doe them for the *vwill of God*.

But to reforme this error, and dissipate this obscuritie, I referr the Reader aswell to the reasons aboue sayd against the second doubt, as also to the expresse words of the Apostle
 1. Cor. 10. sayeng, *Sive manducatis, sive bibitis, sive quid aliud facitis, omnia in gloria Dei facite*, VWhether yow eate or drinke, or doe any thing els, doe it all to the glorie of God: And S. *Augustine* sayth to the fowle well ordered, Thow doest prayse God when thow takest thy refection, when thow doest eate, when thow doest drinke; thow doest prayse him when thow doest repose in thy bed, thow doest also prayse him when thow doest sleepe.

4. Cause. The fourth and last doubt and hesitation proceeds from naturall things which seeme abiect, and wherof a man hath some shamefastnesse.

For remedie against which hesitation and error, serue very fitly aswell all those reasons against the second and third doubts, as also these words of S. *Paul* which seemeth to touch the same, *Quæ putamus ignobiliora membra corporis esse, his honorem abundantiorum circundamus; & quæ inhonesta sunt nostra, abundantiorum honestatem habent*; that is to say, Those partes which wee think to be the baser and most dishonest members of the bodie, wee couer and adorne with greater care and diligence; and those that are our most vn honest partes are more sumptuously decked: wherfore no

man in suche case ought to loose the presence of God, knowing that the Sonne beating on the dunghill, is no more obscured then when it shineth on the greene meddowe or fayre feild.

*Of the fift degree of perfect
Intention.*

CHAP. XII.

THE fift degree of this Throne or *Cleerly* perfectiō of this Intention is *Cleer* *the 5. degree.* ly (that is) that it be accompaigned with a liuely fayth, namely that according as one knoweth that the worke so done is the *vwill of God*, so with a liuely fayth, and a cleer sight casting his eyes theron, and firmly fixing them in the same, hee steadfastly behold it as the same very *vwill of God*, which in deed in it self is no other but God himself. Hee must (I say) in spirit behold the worke, not as that worke, but as this will; looking not on the thing exteriour, but on the diuine pleasure interiour; not as any thing created, but as the *vwill of God* and God himself vncreated: for though therin thear be something created, yet that is nothing in respect of him that is thear vncreated; and though thear be both the one and the other, yet wee must not see both,

but turne from the one, and contemplate the other ; because that as it is created and a humane worke, it bringeth no light, but as it is vncreated and the vvill of God ; so ought wee not to fix our spirit on it as it is a humane worke, but as it is the vvill of God ; because our spirit can neuer see the beautie, light, and perfection of the one, whiles it is cloathed with the obscure Image of the other : for though hee see by this light of the vvill of God, that hee must doe the worke exterior or interior which it requireth , yet must hee not fix his spirit in the worke but in this will ; for as none can see the light of this will which will not doe the worke, so none can see the same light which will only see the worke ; but as the soule is well inspired to doe the worke by motion of that will , so is shee well illuminated when fixed in this will, shee seeth not the worke as a worke, but as the vvill of God.

Obiectiō. Heer yow will say , if shee dehold not the worke, how can shee doe it well ? I answer, that I say not simplie that shee should not behold the worke ; but, that shee should not behold it as the worke, but as the vvill of God : for as it is his will that shee doe the worke, so is it that shee doe it not as the worke , but as his will ; and therefore in the worke must only looke vpon his will.

Obiectiō. But shee cannot choose (say yow) but behold the worke in doing it , though shee

doe what shee can to the contrarie. I answer, *Answer.*
 that though shee cannot choose but see the
 worke, yet can shee choose whether shee will
 see it as the work or as the *vwill of God*; name-
 ly, by this degree of liuely fayth: And if
 shee doe what shee can, not to see the worke
 as the worke, but to fix herselfe only in the
vwill of God; all the rest of the worke which by
 imagination or otherwise remaineth in the
 mind is the *vwill of God* whoe so will haue it;
 and therefore as his will shee must accept of it,
 and as such behold it; and so doing shee seeth
 nothing but the *vwill of God*. But of this hath
 been spoaken in the third degree.

By this degree which wee call *Cleerly ope-*
rating with liuely Fayth, is excluded all dull- *Fault a-*
 nesse or (as it were) sleepinesse or slownesse *gainst this*
 of Fayth, which ordinarily heerin hindreth *degree.*
 vs of much spirituall profit, and depriueth vs
 of great light and knowledge of God: by which
 dullnesse of Fayth I meane not a totall vnbe-
 leiuing, as though one beleiued not that the
 worke so done with such direction of inten-
 tion were the *vwill of God*, but I meane a cer-
 taine drowlines, slacknes, and negligence of
 spirit in producing an interior act of the fayth
 which hee hath, wherby actually to behold
 and contemplat the same as the very *vwill of*
God, and not as any humaine operation and
 worke of his owne; so that not practising the
 fayth which hee hath, nor extending the same

Similies.

any farther then to humaine operation, nor lifting vp his mind with full assurance to his diuine will, it happeneth that neither his Intelligēce is illuminated by this cleer light, nor his will inflamed by this burning loue, nor his soule allured by this perfect beauty, nor enlarged by this grētnes, nor eleuated by this highnes, nor innobled by this maiesty, nor (finally) viuiified by this quickning spirit of God; but for want of practising that which he knoweth and extēding actually his fayth to that which hee beleiueth, liueth in the penurie, pouerty, and obscuritie of his soule: so being like to him that hath a sword at his side, but for want of drawing it forth letteth him self be killed; or to him whoe hath a soueraigne medecine in his shop, but for want of applyeng the same dyeth of his disease; or finally, whoe hath prouision sufficient in his howse, and wyne enough in his celler, but for want of dressing the one starueth for hunger, and of drawing the other dyeth for thirst. But contrariwise by this degre of viuacitie or liuelines of fayth, by this actuall seing, and fixed contemplation and beholding of this *vwill of God*, all such miserie goeth away, all such darknes flyeth away, all such obscuritie vanisheth out of sight, and the soule remaineth vnited to his will and conioyned with God, illuminated, viui-fied, and eleuated in an unspeakable manner.

The sixt degree of perfect
Intention.

CHAP. XIII.



THE sixt degree of this Throne *Speedily,*
 is *Speedily* (that is) that this *the sixt*
 intētion adorned with the fore-*degree.*
 said five perfections be quickly
 directed, not at the end of the
 worke, nor in the midst, but before wee take
 the same in hand. By which degree is exclu- *Faultes*
 ded all slownes and slacknes of rectifyeng our *against*
 intention when wee begin to doe or suffer *this de-*
 any thing ; wherby vntill our intention be *gree.*
 rectified wee are deprived some tymes of the
 profit and merit of the worke, as (1) doing (1.)
 the same some tymes with some lesse inten-
 tion then for the only *vwill of God* , and some
 tymes (2) with no good intention at all, yea (2.)
 and sometymes wee demerit and offend by
 the same, as (3) doing or suffering it with an (3.)
 euill intention, and to an euill end and pur-
 pose ; and all for want of this diligence and
 speedines in directing our intention at the
 beginning, as this degree requireth.

Yet if so wee offend against this degree,
 wee must repaire the fault aswell as wee can,

in directing our intention as soone as wee remember our selves.

*A man
fayling in
the former
degrees,
must needs
fayle in
the latter,
but not
contrarie-
wise.*

Moreover, it is to be noted, that a man may fayle or offend against some of these degrees which be last in order, and yet not against others which are precedent, as a man may be destitute of the greater perfection, yet not of the lesser; but a man can not fayle in any one of the first degrees in order, without fayling in all the rest which followe, because one can not lacke the lesser perfection without wanting the greater.

And therefore our intention by slownesse may offend against this sixt degree of Speedines, being directed late, and towards the end of the work to the vwill of God, and yet may be furnished with the other five.

It may also with this sixt fayle in the fifth degree of Cleernes by a sleepines of fayth, not beholding the worke as the verie vwill of God, and yet may be fortified with the other foure.

As it may also with the sixt and fift degree fayle in the fourth of Assurance by hesitation, not firmly beleiuing that the worke done with the intention heer taught is the verie vwill of God, and yet may be furnished with the other three, and so of the rest.

But contrariwise our intention can not fayle in any of the degrees which are first in order, without fayling in all which followe.

for it can not offend against the fift without offending against the sixt ; nor against the fourth without offending against the fift and sixt ; and so forth vnto the first degree, which if it fayle, all the rest doe likewise fayle : so as yow may see, thear is more danger and losse to fayle in the first then in the last.

Now, if a man be fallen into any one of these defaults in the beginning of the worke, hee must not perseuer and cast all away, but rather remember the common sayeng, Better late then neuer; and so at least in prosecuting or finishing the worke, hee must rectifie his crooked intention by these degrees, and by the straight line of Gods loue, cutting of euerie imperfection by the particular degree against which it millitateth.

And heerin a man ought to employ all his spirit and diligence, all his care and vigilance during the worke, examining and purifieng his intention by these degrees, and to take heed if ail be therin comprehended, or whether for want of any of them it be contaminated with any spot of self loue obscuring her beautie, or vayled with any clowd of proper will couering her rarious splendour ; which examen and rectification of intention is so good, so excellent, and so profitable an occupation of the mind, that I wish and desire all that practise this exercise to employ themselves wholly therein ; as being of all others the

*Deuotion
cupation
during the
worke.*

most direct, short, and readiest way to all perfection, leading vs (as it were) by the hand to the knowledge of our selves, and displaying all our hidden self loue, bewrayeng all our secret passions, layeng open all our inclosed affections, and poynting out as with her finger all our vknown imperfections. And for want of this continuall occupation of our selves in our interior, for lacke of this due examination of our intention, and vigilant watch ouer our heart, it harboureth many passions iudging them to be inspirations, yeildeth to many affections thinking them to be holie actions, is filled with self loue esteeming it the loue of God, and (finally) doth the will of the old man, yet beleuiing it is the disire of the new. In which examination of our intention I admonish this, that no man trust himself, and beleiue his first sight or inspection into the same, nor think that all goeth well if at the first hee see nothing amisse, because this cometh for the most part, not for want of fault but of light, nor for lacke of abundance of self loue or proper will to be discovered, but for want of knowledge and a sharpe sight wherby to discern it; which sight and light hee shall (doubtles) haue, whoe still will remaine in his interior: for, as hee that cometh from abroad out of the Sunne into some obscure place or chamber, seeth nothing at the first, but if hee remaine thear awhile hee seeth

Note.

Similie.

whatsoever is therein ; so the mind that cometh from abroad , and from exterior affayres into the interior or inward closet of the soule seeth nothing therein , but stayeng thear a while discovereth whatsoever lyeth hidden imperceptible : Loe then the six degrees of this mystical Throne,

*How to continue this puritie of
Intention.*

CHAP. XIIII.

HAVING ascended by order all the degrees of the Throne, we must now consider her topp and seate of stable Perseuerance, wherein this great Salomon sitteth and reposes; and hauing seene how the mind is fixed in the only will of God, wee must know how it may perseuer therein; which to effect thear betwoe wayes *Tuuo* and meanes, the first wherof is for Beginners *meanes to continue the purified Intention.* the other for those which haue made some good progresse, though (if diligent endeouour supplie the want in Beginners) both they and the others may vse both meanes, as their deuotion shall serue them.

I.

The first is practised by diuers internal *Meanes.* acts of the mind , as first by an act of filiall

feare or profownd reuerence of God feing himself so neer vnto him, so illuminated by his presence, so enuironed with his splendour, and) as it were) on euerie side compassed about with the bright beames and illustration of his diuinitie.

Luc. 5.

Some tymes by an abyssall Humilitie and abasing of him self, feing his miserie honored with the actuall assistance, and his indignitie accompanied with the true presence of God; and so rightly crieng out with S. Peter sayeng, *Exi â me quia homo peccator sum* (Domine) Depart from mee (ô Lord) because I am a sinfull man.

Againe, by a great Admiracion, feing God to cooperate so familiarlie with him in that which hee doth.

Likewise, by an extreame Ioy and exultation of heart, feing himself made the liuely instrument and temple of God.

In like maner, by a sweet and amorous inclination towards the celestially Bridegroom, tasting his great clemencie and goodnes.

Farther, by an inward Iubilacion and heartie ioy in the soule, perceiuing her self to be deliuered from the seruitude of her self, and set free from the bondage of proper will.

Moreouer, by a totall resignation and deliuering vp of the soule into the hands of her spouse to enioy him more fully.

Againe, by acts of perpetuall Abnegation

of him self, as hauing fownd by experience the perfect consolation, and happie fruit which immediatly springeth, and infallibly cometh therof.

Also, by a true Annihilation of him self, proceeding from the propinquitie and nearnes of the Allmightie and infinit essence of God.

In like sort, by holie and heauenly desires, wishes, and suspires, to be alwayes conuersant in heauen; seing now the chaines of his proper will to be broken which tied him so before vnto the earth.

Finally, by a most intimate Loue of God, feeling the ardour and sweet burning flame of his diuine loue.

And to conclude, by an Attention to the straight vnion already made betwixt God and the soule by vnitie of their wills in the worke, entertaining, nourishing, and chea- rishing the same vnion by diligently hearing, willingly obayeng, and ioyfully following the tract of the same spirit of God.

The second and more essentiall meanes to conserue entier the pure and perfect intention, is to make an expropriatiō of the worke (that is) that when a man hath so rectified and purified his intention according to these degrees, hee ought to put of (as it were) the worke both exterior and interior, as not being his owne, but knowing that (in veritie)

2.

Meanes.

after such rectification it is not his will that doth the worke, but the *vwill of God*; nor his spirit; but the spirit of God; and by consequence that it is not himself but God that doth the same, hee being only the meer Instrument (though free) nay nor that Instrument neither as of him self, but the same giuen him by God: and therefore (I say) hee ought to esteeme, and firmly behold the verie worke so done, as the verie will, operation, and spirit of God, as hath been touched in the fourth degree. And not only the soule must so esteeme and behold it as the verie *vwill of God*, but also (all other things set apart) must adheare therunto, and with all her power remaine recollected therein; so that being wholly established and immoueable settled in the same, keeping forth all bruit and noise of the world, and all clouds of passions and distracting thoughts, shee shall discover this light of heauen in a quiet and profound silence, and tast this verie life, and viuifying spirit of Gods *vwill* in great abundance.

Note.

VVhear must be noted that wee say (hee must behold the worke as the verie *vwill of God*, and not that hee behold the said will in the worke) and that to eschew many errors, blindnes, and deceits, which proceed from such kind of speech and practise.

The first error.

For first, when wee say that wee must behold

God or his will in our worke or, in our intention ; it is so conceiued and vnderstood , as if one should behold the same will as contayned and inclosed in the worke, as in some vessell, place, space, or circuit corporall, imaginarie, or intellectuall ; hee, nor his will hauing neither place nor situation , as contayned therein.

Secondly , in so sayeng , diuers doe endeuour to see or consider the will and the worke both together, and not the *vwill of God* only and alone ; and so (indeed) the soule can not know nor tast the liuely *vwill of God* ; for it being spirit and life, it is impossible that shee should be capable thereof in any perfection , whiles shee is filled and possessed with the worke be it exterior or interior, but when shee taketh the verie worke for the verie will.

2.

Thirdly, by such an imagination of seing the *vwill of God* in the worke or in the intention, is hindred the vnion with the same will, as making the will one thing, and the intention another.

3.

Finally , when so wee consider or contemplate God or his will in our work or intention, the same worke or intention is the principall obiekt of our contemplation or spirituall sight, whereas (indeed) it should be the only *vwill of God*.

4.


For these causes therefore I say not that we must behold the *v*vill of God in our worke or intention ; but I say we must behold the worke or intention as the verie *v*vill of God, which is God himself, whoe by his presence doth anihillate in this respect both the worke, and intention or will of man; not that indeed they are nothing (hauing alwayes their essence) but that they are so little that in comparison and the presence of God they are nothing; and though they be some thing , yet must they not heer be seene as such , but as nothing; because though in it self the worke be some thing, yet considered in the *v*vill of God , it is nothing, but euen the same *v*vill of God into which it is transformed, and so of death and darknes is made life and brightness, and that which in it self was corporall, in the *v*vill of God is made spirituall.

VVherfore, so taking the worke whether exterior or interior, not as his owne , but as the verie pure *v*vill of God without any hesitation, excluding all other thoughts and distractions , let the soule fix her self in the same with all her forces, with all simplicitie, constancie, veritie, and viuacitie of fayth; let her adheare therunto, inclose, plunge, and transforme her selfe therinto, being her light, life, peace, and ioy, her center and repose; as being her rule and perfection, her treasure and riches, her beginning and end ; and so shall

shee accomplish the continuation of these six degrees of perfect Intention, and by stabilitie of perseuerance shall establish in her self this seat, and shall make great king Salomon her celestiall spouse sweetly repose therein.

How the celestiall Bridegroom and his spouse
in their Dialogue in the Canticles
make mention of this seat or
spirituall Throne vpon
her six degrees.

CHAP. XV.

 F this Throne with her six mysti-
call degrees is made mention in
the Canticles of Salomon.

For, of the first of Remembrance I.
is spoken, when the celestiall Bridegroom Actually.
sayth to his spouse, *Pone me vt signaculum super* Cant. 8.
cor tuum, vt signaculum super brachium tuum, Put
mee as a signet vpon thy heart, and as a signet
vpon thine arme: for, a signet maketh impres-
sion, and impression signifies Remembrance
against Obliuion; by the heart is meant the
intention or affection; by the arme the action;
the heart and the arme together doth signifie
the actuall intention. VVhen then the bride-
groom layth to his spouse that shee imprint

him as a signet, hee will haue her to be mindfull of him : when hee sayth to her that shee print him in her heart , hee desires that shee remember him in her affection or intention: and when hee wisheth her to imprint him also on her Arme, hee will haue her in her intention to haue an actuall Remembrance of him ; which actuall Remembrance is this first degree called *Actually*.

2.
Onely.
Cant.1.
& 3.

The second degree which is *Onely*, is toucht when the Bridegroom speaking to his spouse sayth vnto her, *Oculi tui columbarum* , Thine eyes are like vnto the eyes of doves ; for , by the dove is signified the soule ; by the eyes of the one , the sight of the other ; and by the simplicitie of that , the simple sight of this. Now, the sight of the soule is her intention which is simple when it is not double ; and it is not double when it hath not twoe obiects, the Creator and the Creature, but one alone (to weet) the Creator, for then the intention is simple when it hath for her sole and simple obiekt God only.

Cant.4.

The same is signified when hee sayth, *Vulnerasti cor meum (soror mea sponsa) vulnerasti cor meum in vno oculorum tuorum* , Thow hast wounded my heart (my sister, my spouse) thow hast wounded my heart by one of thine eyes : for , the soule hauing twoe eyes or sights , the one seing the Creature , the other the Creator , shee seemeth exceeding

sayr in the presence of God, when hauing put out that, shee seeth only with this ; for then shee woundeth his heart with her loue. Of this only intention and simple eyesight our Saviour speaketh, when hee sayth, *Si oculus tuus simplex fuerit, totum corpus tuum lucidum erit*, If thine eye be simple, all thy body shall be lightsome.

Matt. 6.

Of the third degree which is (willingly) is made mention when the spouse sayth, *Pessu-*

3.
willingly.
Cant. 5.

lum ostij mei aperui dilecto meo, I vnbolted my doore to my welbeloued ; for, which is this bolt which barreth our doore against our

Sauour but our proper will ? and how is it taken away but by the renunciation therof for the *vwill of God* ? and when is it taken away willingly, if not when the soule doth it herself ?

When then the spouse sayth that herself vnbolted her doore to her welbeloued, her meaning is, that renouncing herself shee did willingly the *vwill of God*, and not by constraint.

The same are wee giuen to vnderstand when

she sayth, *Vadam ad montē Myrrha*, I will goe to

Cant. 4.

the mountaine of myrrhe : for, by bitter myrrhe is represented vnto vs the bitternes of

Abnegation, to doe the *vwill of God* : by the Mountaine, the sublimitie of this Abnegatiō,

elevating a man aboue himself in God, as is

said, *Sedebit solitarius & tacebit, quia leuauit se su-*

Thren. 3.

pra se, Hee shall remaine solitarie and be silent,

because hee hath lifted himself aboue himself.

By that which is said that she went, is signified

that it was freely and of her owne good will, without any constraint, repugnance, or sadness, so willingly renouncing herself for the vwill of God as hee whoe said, *Voluntariè sacrificabo tibi*, I will offer sacrifice vnto the willingly.

4. The fourth degree which is (Assuredly) is touched by the spouse when shee sayth, *Ego dilecto meo, & ad me conuersio illius*, I belong to my welbeloued, and hee turneth himself towards mee: for, by the first part of this sentence shee comprehendeth all the degrees before rehearsed, and by the other shee toucheth this degree of Assurance; for in sayeng (I appertaine to my welbeloued) it is as much as if shee said, I haue purified my soule and intention, eleuating and addresssing it vnto him actually without obliuion, only, without any other end, and willingly, without sadness, and so I ame wholly his, he entirely possesseth mee, *Apoc. 21.* hee hath taken mee for his owne, *Sicut sponsam ornata[m] viro suo*, As a spouse adorned for her bridegroom: and as I ame his, so reciprocally his conuersion is vnto mee; as I ame his, so likewise is hee mine; for the same internal acts which make mee his, make him also myne; as the bond or lawe of loue doth giue mee vnto him, so doth it giue him vnto mee; and as by the other degrees hee hath assurance of mee, so by this which necessarily followeth them, haue I assurance of him. Behold

then wherfore I say, that Assuredly I belong to my welbeloued, and that his conuersion is to mee; which I know, not only assuredly without hesitation, but also see cleerly without sleepines of fayth, wherby I knowe him and see him, which is

The fift degree to which I did so ardently aspire, which I so long tyme desired, and often demaunded of my spouse sayeng, *Indica mihi quem diligis anima mea, ubi pascas, ubi cubas in meridie*, O thou whom my soule doth loue, declare vnto mee whear thou doest feed, whear thou doest repose at Nooneday (that is to say) in the ardour and liuely flames of loue and meridian light, whear by vnion with him I may be inflamed and burned with his diuine fire, lightned and illuminated with his celestiall splendour. I say (whear doth hee repose) for the great quietnes which hee hath in my soule, when hee is thear by my absence, and maketh his abroad thear by my abnegation; for it is then that hee repositeth thear as in his bed, of which is said. *En le Tulum Salomonis sexaginta fortes ambiunt*, Behold, threescore strong men which compasse about Salomons bed: this bed being no other then my heart; for, hee is *Deus cordis mei*, the God of my heart, and *Deus in medio eius non commouebitur*, God shall not be moued from the midst thereof: and, to make mee attaine to this happy

5.

Cleerly.

Cant. 1.

Cant. 3.

Psal. 72.

Psal. 45.

Cant. 2. *dilectus meus loquitur mihi*, Behold, my welbeloued speaketh to mee, and maketh mee hasten, inuiting mee often, and incessantly distilling thes sweet words in the eare of my soule.

6. *Surge, propera (amica mea, formosa mea)*
Speedily. veni. Arise, hasten (my dear, my beautifull
Cant. 2. and come. In which gracious inuitation he calleth mee sweetly to his familiarities, and will haue mee come vnto him, and to that end, first hee wisheth mee to arise (to weete from the base and abiect condition of my corrupt nature by these degrees afore sayd; afterwards, that I doe it speedily, because they goe not to him, which goe with drowlines or slownes, for *Nescit molimina tarda sancti spiritus gratia*, The holy ghost loues not the slacke operation. And therefore the mother of God hauing conceiued him, representing the soule which by inspiration doth the same, *Abiit in montana*, went vnto the mountaine, which is Iesus Christ, in perfection, *Cum festinatione*, speedily, which is the sixt and last degree.

The seat of continuation. And that wee may not think that shee hath forgotten the seat of this throne, which is the continuation of all these degrees, whear shee maketh her spouse repose after hauing fownd him so happily, behold

what shee sayth, *Tenui eum; nec dimittam* *donec introducam in domum matris mee, & in cubiculum genitricis mee*, I haue caught him, and will not let him goe, vntill I bring him into my mothers house, and into her chamber which brought mee forth. I haue caught him, (to weet, by the six internall acts and degrees aforesaid) and will not let him goe (by my negligence and coldnes) but will keepe him with great vigilance, and will cherish him by intimate affection and ardent loue, vntill I bring him into my mothers house (the church, by vertuous life, good example, or preaching) and into her chamber which brought mee forth namely, into my particular Order, by a religious life and celestiall contemplation) and so cherishing him dayly in my soule, will make him repose on this seat of Continuation, and I shall prepare this Throne, with the six degrees for my true king *Salomon, Quem laudant simul astra matutina*, VVhom the morning stars together do praise; Loe how this holie soule speaketh for the instruction, consolation, and encouragement of others which are not as yet so perfect and so farre aduanced.

Iob. 38.

Neither ought any man to think that wee put or constitut too many degrees in this intention, because that euen of it self

VVhy these six degrees be

beere putt
downe.

1.
Cause.

2.

3.

(being perfect) it hath them all, and that without them it can not be perfect: though in liew of their being thear *implicite* or obscurely, wee haue declared them *explicite* and more cleerly, to the end wee may well and perfectly discerne of our interiour, which is the point of greatest importance of all, and for want of which, verie spirituall men often remaine in darknes; seing also (2) they bring so great profit and light, eleuating the soule to such a high degree as may appear by what is aboue said in this chapter; seing finally (3) though wee haue thus distinguished them the better to discerne of the said intention and to examin the same therby, yet notwithstanding by one only feruent and vertuous act, they be all effected and brought forth together; and that with the same facilitie and no otherwise, then if wee had not distinguished them.

How all mortifications and vertues, and the true imitation of Christs life and passion, are perfectly practised by this rule and exercise.

CHAP. XVI.

Concerning

CONCERNING the mortifications and vertues, and likewise touching the imitation of our Saviour in his life and passion (which are so necessarie as without them in vaine a man aspireth to spirituall life) as the breuitie of this abridgement doth not permit to treat of them directly, but onely indirectly; so is it not necessarie, seing they are cleerly seene, and most perfectly practised in this *vwill of God*; which though it be manifest by the second chapter, declaring how all perfections are heerin contained (euerie one wherof containeth all mortifications and vertues) yet for better satisfaction of all men that would follow this rule, it seemeth not amisse to shew it by examples.

*Demonstrations
by example.*

I.
VWhoesoever then is greiuously and unjustly persecuted, and supporteth and patiently endureth the same according to the foresaid documēt of the *vwill of God* whoe would haue it so; such a one shall mortifie the passion of enuie, practise the vertue of patience, and imitate our Saviour, whoe in like persecution had like patience.

2.
Likewise, hee that being mocked and with outrageous speeches reuiled, and keepeth silence for this only will and pleasure of God; shall mortifie the passion of anger, practise the vertue of meeknes, and imitate our Saviour, whoe when hee was blasphemed and

mocked of the Iewes behaued him self in like manner.

3. So also, hee that washeth the feet of some poore Pilgrim or of his brethren (as the custome is in religious houses) with this pure intention; hee shall mortifie the vice of pride, practise the vertue of humilitie, and imitate our Sauour, washing the feet of his Apostles.

4. Againe, whoe for the only pleasure of God prayeth for those that doe him open iniurie, and seeke his death; shall mortifie the passion of Reuenge, exercise the vertue of charitie, and imitate our Sauour, whoe prayed for those that persecuted him and put him to death.

5. Moreouer, hee that with this only end and motiue of Gods vvil, answereth not when hee is falsly accused (discretion alwayes presupposed) shall mortifie self loue, practise the vertue of silence, and followe heerin Iesus Christ, whoe answered nothing to the false witnesse brought in against him.

6. I might bring infinite other like examples to this end, but wee will conclude with this which comprehendeth all others; namely, that whensoever a man according to this Rule, doth any thing disagreeable to sensuality or affection, and leaueth any thing pleasant or agreeable to the same, for to doe the vvil

of God, hee mortifieth the proper will, practiseth the vertue of Resignation, and imitateth our sweet Sauour whome said, *I come not to doe myne owne will, but the will of my father Ioan. 6. vvho sent mee.*

Behold then, how it appeareth that whensoever a man doth practise this exercise or rule of life, hee perfectly practiseth therewith all the mortification, vertue, and imitation of the life and passion of our Sauour Christ, whome in all things sought to doe the will of his father.

VVhear is to be noted, that in the said *Tvvoe* life and passion of our Sauour are twoe *things in* things (to weet) the paines or torments *generall* which hee suffered, and the end wherfore hee *in the lyfe* suffered them; namely, to doe the will of *of our Sa-* his father; both which wee ought to imitate *uiour to* as a paterne and example of our life, himself *imitate.* sayeng, *Exemplum dedi vobis*, I haue giuen *Ioan. 13.* yow an example: and if it had not bein to haue giuen vs an example, what needed hee to haue suffered so much, seing one only dropp of his blood, yea his only will had, bein sufficient to haue redeemed vs. Now, *Some say-* of these twoe things some want the one, *le in the* and some the other. As for those that want the *one, and* first (namely) suffering with Christ; I wish them *some in* to heare the wordes of Saint Peter sayeng, *the other.* *I.* *Christus passus est pro nobis, vobis relinquens* *1. Petr. 2.*

exemplum ut sequamini vestigia eius, Christ hath suffered for vs; leauing to yow an example that yow might followe his stepps; and of S. **Röm. 8.** *Paule, Si compatimur, & conglorificabimur*, If wee suffer togeather, wee shall also be glorified togeather: and likewise of S. **Ioan. 2.** *Qui dicit se in ipso manere, debet sicut ille ambulauit & ipse ambulare*, VVhoe sayth that hee remaineth in him, ought to walke as hee hath walked. As for those which fayle in the other (to weet) in hauing that intention of the only vwill of God, in that they doe or suffer, they must knowe that they are not so perfect imitators of *Iesus Christ* as (perhaps) they thinke, though they doe or suffer much, because they want one of these twoe things of his imitation (namely) the end and intention, which is without comparison the cheefest of the twoe; and so they followe the exterior works of his body, but not the interior acts of his soule; and conforme themselves to the exterior humanitie, but not to the interior, nor to the diuinitie, partlie doing or suffering that which hee did or suffered, but not as hee did or suffered, enduring in some sort with the Sonne heer on earth, but not for the will of the father which is in heauen, because they haue not this end of Gods will, which is so excellent that the Angells haue no better, nor any other end then that; and is such that it maketh not only our prayers and painfull works or suffrings

agreeable to God, but also our works that be pleasant and delightfull (as is aboue said) being done sincerely without all fayning for this end and intention.

VVherfore, when any hard thing presenteth it self to be done or suffered, let a man doe or suffer the same for this diuine will; and so hee shall cloath himself with the Passion of our Sauour, as being the same verie will in such things difficile; and shall perfectly imitate him in both the sayd poynts of suffering, and of the true end of suffering.

A particular meanes for Beginners how to enter into the practise of this rule, and how a man may keepe himself therein, and greatly fructifie and goe forvvard in the same.

CHAP. XVII.

BV T because this rule and exercise consisteth cheifly in interior practise, and in the discerning of the motions of our heart, which are hardly discovered at the beginning; and because through slowth and forgetfulness as well the Beginners as others let passe much

*Means to
enter and
continue
in this
practise.*

tyme, yea sometymes many howres of the day without practising the same: Therefore as well to open the way to Beginners and to makethem an entrance to the practise thereof, as also to excitate the slacknes, and help the forgetfulnes of others, I will in fewe lines lay downe some particular meanes wherein all may profitably exercise themselves, as leading the beginners (as it were) by the hand, to the true knowledge of their heart and interiour, and to the perfect practise of the same exercise, putting both them and the others in mind of their dutie and fidelitie, inciting and spurring them forward to the faythfull practise therof.

*Practise
upon the
5. Senses.*

Let him therefore that practiseth this Rule lay downe a taske euerie day, binding himself therto, not by the band of any kind of synne mortall or veniall, but by a full and resolute purpose to mortifie, and renounce himself for the vwill of God some certaine tymes, as thrice, fiewe, or ten tymes, according to his feruour and deuotion; which abnegations or mortifications shalbe taken or practised by any sence, facultie, or power either of body or soule: Of the body, as by the fiewe senses, seing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching; by doing or suffering that which is contrarie or vnpleasant to the same: as when hee desireth to see any curious thing, behold any beautifull person, looke on any delight-

full place, as pleasant gardins, faire castles, sumptuous and costly buildings; or (finally) any other thing gratefull to the sight; yea, and when hee desireth curiously to cast his eyes this way or that way, wherby hee is distracted from thinking of God: in all which cases hee ought to mortifie his sight by renouncing therein his will for the only *vwill* of God.

In like maner, when hee desireth to heare any pleasant musick, sweet instrument, delightfull song, curious and strange newes and reports, and whatsoeuer is agreeable to the eare.

Also, when hee would tast some delicate meats, delicious drinkes, pleasant fruits, or whatsoeuer hee findeth to be delightfull to the tast, though in it self the thing be not precious or rare.

The like wee say touching smelling, to which a man ought to denie all perfumes, and other extraordinarie pleasant things.

In all which cases (I say) a man may haue matter and take occasion, often in the day to renounce himself for the *vwill* of God, in leauing the pleasure of such things according to the Rules aboue said; offering them vp willingly as a sacrifice to God, sayeng with the Prophet, *Voluntariè sacrificabo tibi*, I will *Psal. 53.* voluntarily offer vp sacrifice vnto thee.

And the same wee say of the things which are contrarie to the said senses (namely) which be vnpleasant to be seene , disagreeable to the eare , noysome to smell , vnfauorie to tast, rude and aultere to touche. And to this purpose our father *S. Francis* sayd , that hee was so dayly conuersant with the leapers, exhibiting vnto them offices of charitie , that both according to reason and to his exterior senses it seemed to him a pleasant and sweet thing to be amongst them, whose sight in the beginning hee did abhorre. And wee reade also of diuers Saints of both sexes , which did kisse and licke the sores and vlcers of poore men, though (perhaps) these examples be left vs rather to be admired then imitated, except it be by like particular diuine inspiration: but although they doe not serue vs for imitation , yet at least may they suffice for condemnation of the delicat nicenesse, and also of the disdaine and hard heartednesse of those of this tyme, whoe can not abide to see them, much lesse asist them.

*S. Elizabeth.
S. Catherine of
Siena.*

3.
*Vpon the
pouers
of the
Soule.*

1.

As touching the powers of the soule, one may likewise take therof his exercise of mortification ; as of the Intelligence, in renouncing for this *vill of God* some curious discours or speculation, or some mundaine, idle , and vainethoughts wherein hee taketh pleasure and delight.

2.

Also, of the Memorie, in expelling all thou-

ghts of iniuries, contempts, disgraces, and mockeries; as also of all dishonest words, discourses, sports, pleasures, and pastimes, and all dishonest acts.

Likewise, by mortifieng the VVill in all her intemperate passions, and disordinate affectiōs which (according to the Philosopher) are eleuen (to weet) loue, desire, ioy respecting good; hatred, detestation, and sadnes respecting euill; which six passiōs appertaine to the partie Concupiscible. Also, hope, dispaire, feare, audacitie, and wrath; which fve haue their residēce in the Irascible parte. All which passions, Boetius and S. Thomas after him, doe reduce to foure (namely) vaine Ioy, vaine feare, vaine hope, and vaine Sadnes in these verses.

Boett. de
consol.
Phil.
Met. 2.
S. Tho.
1. 2. 2.

Tu quoque si vis

Lumine claro

Cernere verum;

Gaudia pelle,

Pelle timorem,

Spemque fugato,

Nec dolor adsit.

That is, if thou wilt cleerly see the truth, driue away Ioy, put of Feare, flie Hope, and auoid Greife.

To this mortification of the will appertaineth also resistance to all temptation of synne

(to weete) of the capitall synnes with all their branches. As of pride which is the head of all the other seuen deadly synns; of vaine glorie with all her branches, which are boasting, hypocrisie, contention, pertinacie, discord, insurrection, detraction, ioy of the euill, and sadnes of the good of his neighbour; of wrath with her offspring of indignation, heart swelling, clamour, blasphemie, contumely, debate, and fighting; of Sloath with her progenie of malice, rancor, pusillanimitie, dispaire, negligence, and distraction; of Couetousnes with her euill race of treason, fraud in trafficke, violence, deceit in words, periurie, vnquietnes, and hardnes of heart; of gluttonie with her children of foolish ioy, scurrilitie, immundicie, babbling, and dullnes of witt; finally, of lechery with her vncleane brood of blyndnes of heart, inconsideration, precipitation, incontinencie, loue of himself, hatred of God, affection of this world, and horror of the next. Of all which kinds of synnes or temptations of them, one may take occasion to renounce his will; and so vpon all these matters rehearsed touching the body or the soule a man may haue sufficient matter to practise this exercise; of such (I say) and so palpable things, as the verie Nouice and beginner can not but find out, and clerly disc

cerne.

Aswell therfore the Beginners for their instruction and entrance, as the others for their excitation and diligence, must limit to themselves euerie day a certaine number of mortifications taken of these things aboue said, and especially of those wherein they find them selves most weake, renouncing themselves therein for the will of God, not forgetting still to view and examine in euerie one, if their pure intention (Throne of Iuory, whear God great Salomon sitteth) be eleuated and established on the six degrees aboue said. And so, both the Beginners shall easilie be brought to the true discerning and knowledge of their interiour, which is a thing of great importance and altogeather necessarie; and the others shalbe continually kept profitable in their exercise; and both the one and the other shall make great advancement and progresse in the same.

VVhear notwithstanding is to be noted, that our meaning is not by the particular practise of this chapter, to acquit them of the generall and continuall in all other things, as though it were sufficient for a man to practise this rule only at those tymes, and in those things which hee hath in this order limited out and bownd him-

self vnto: for, our meaning is, that hee should continually in all things practise the same (as hath bein taught) as well, and as diligently as hee can, and that ouer and besides that generall care, and practise incertaine and vnlimited, hee should haue this particular carefull practise therof, thus tasked and limited out, and that for the causes in the beginning of this chapter aboue alleaged,

Of twoe errors vvhich may happen in this exercise, vvith their remedies.

CHAP. XVIII.



WE think it heer necessarie to giue an aduertisement of twoe errors, and contrarie extremities which may happen in the practise of this Rule.

- I. **Error.** The first is, of those which may be likened to *Iacob*, whoe as soone as hee was married vnto *Rachel* figuring the contemplatiue life, despised *Lia* representing the actiue life: for, seeing cleerly and perfectly the whole actiue life briefly in this *Compendium*, they may easily comprehend the same, and so (perchance) may think that that suffiseth without any farther

ther practise therof. Againe, seing themselves
so eleuated euen at the first true and faythfull
practise of this Rule, and transported (as it
were) into the contemplatiue life, they would
willingly remaine therein, for the sweetnes
they find in such contemplation.

For remedie wherof they must vnderstand, *Remedie.*
that it is not inough to haue the Actiue life by
only speculation, but must also haue it by
practise, and that it is not sufficient to know
what they ought to doe, and how they ought
to practise vertue or extirpate vice (which
knowledge by this Rule is easily had) but they
must also put the same in practise, by rooting
out vice and planting vertue, vntill such tyme
as they haue acquired some good habit ther-
of. For, though this Rule and way aboue all
other, giueth a merueilous aduantage and
aduancement both in the knowledge and
practise of the Actiue life, yet can it not make
a man perfect therein, vnlesse hee ioyne ther-
to faythfull practise. So that though by the
light of this exercise a man knoweth the ac-
tiue life, and seeth (as it were) presently a
gate open to the contemplatiue, for the great
affinitie and likenes of this kind of actiue life
with that which is comtemplatiue; yet must
hee not at the first enter so farre therein, as to
cast of the actiue, as if hee had not any more
need to practise himself therein; but must still
pursue the mortification of himself and his
passions, which hee shall more sufficiently and

speedily doe by this rule then any other the faythfull practise wherof effecteth in twoe or three moonthes, that which some others doe not in so many yeares.

2.
Error.

The other error and contrarie extremitie which heer may happen is, of those whoe being too much addicted to the administration of *Martha*, will not choose the better parte with *Marie*, having so great affection to the active life that they would not proceed to the contemplative, and all because they know not the excellency therof; whear we meane not only of the exterior active life but especiallie of the interior, consisting in the acts of the intelligence and of the will. For, some seing themselves drawn (as it were) by the hand out of the active life, and from their accustomed acts of discourses, meditation, and aspirations, and (as it were) forced by this right Rule to fix the full force of their mind in this only *v*vill of God, and wholie to adhear therto (wherin consisteth the pure and essentiall contemplation) they know not whear they are nor how to behaue themselves, and so turne away and cast of such naked and pure contemplation, esteeming that the spirituall practise of the mind hath neither profit, nor yet any veritie, which is not

accompanied with such their accustomed acts, and discourses of the wit.

For remedie then of this error, and for the casting of of these superfluous acts, and first for those of the Intelligence, the practiser of this Rule must know that our

Remedie
for the
Intelli-
gence.

interiour is not made perfect, nor the true contemplation gotten by such discourses and speculation, which are the acts of the vnderstanding, but by seruour, loue, and affection, which are the acts of the will, because that no speculation of the Intelligence can possesse or enioy God, but the loue of the

will; and therefore S. Denis sayth, *Supposita S. Dionys Deitenebra cooperiuntur omni lumine, & absconduntur omni cognitioni, & si aliquis videns Deum intellexit quod vidit, non ipsum vidit, sed aliquid quod est eius.*

S. Dionys
3.ep. ad
Caium
Mon.

The hidden darknes of God (which hee calleth the abundance of light) are vnkowne to all lights, and kept secret from all knowledge; and if any one seing God hath vnderstood what hee sawe, hee hath not seene him, but somewhat appertayning vnto him; for, the speculation of the Intelligence doth proportion God allmightie, infinite, and incomprehensible to our smalle capacitie; but contrariwise the will by loue proportioneth it self in some degree to the immensitie, infinitie, and omnipotencie of God; so that the operation of the

Intelligence maketh God like vnto man, causing him (as it were) to descend vnto vs; but the loue of the VWill maketh man like vnto God, eleuating the soule vnto him. Finally, this speculation of the Intelligence is a humane thing, making vs remaine in our selves; but the affection of the VWill is a diuine thing, eleuating and drawing vs out of our selves to be transformed into God. And therefore it is cleere that such speculations and discourses of the Intelligence, are not perfection nor true contemplation, consisting in a certaine kind of vision of God, so farr as this mortallitie permitteth, wherunto the speculation of the Intelligence is preiudiciall. And therefore the heavenly Bridegroom admonisheth thereof the spouse in the Canticle when hee sayth

Cant. 6. *Auerte oculos tuos a me,* Turne away thine eyes from mee (that is) of curious discours and speculation of the Intelligence, *Quia ipsi manolare fecerunt,* Because they haue made mee flie away (namely) from the sight and view which obscured by such discourses can not behold mee. The same are wee taught mystically by the Angell, whoe made Iacob lame of one of his leggs; for by the twoe leggs are signified the twoe principall powers of the soule, Intelligence and VWill, wherof the one must be made lame (to weet) the Intelligence, that the soule may walke as shee ought towards God. The verie same also is signified when

when the Bridegroom sayth vnto the spouse,
Vulnerasti cor meum (soror mea, sponsa) in vno oculo- Cant. 4.
lorum tuorum, Thow hast wounded my heart
 (my sister, my spouse) in one of thine eyes
 (to weete) by thy VVill enflamed, which is
 but one alone, when the other of the Vnder-
 standing is put out. For, these twoe powers *Similie.*
 of the soule be like the twoe horses of a coach,
 wherof the one is too slowe, the other too
 swift, the VVill being so dull and slowe for
 want of loue, that it will scarce goe, and the
 Vnderstanding so swift and speedy through
 curiositie that it will alwayes runne; so that
 the one hath need of the goad, and the other
 of the bridle. VVherfore it must be stopped,
 and his curious course cutt of, when by the
 tract of the holie ghost the soule is drawne,
 and lifted vp to the essentiall contemplation
 of God; and this is that which S. Denis writing
 to Timothy sayth, *Derelinque intellectuales opera-*
tiones, & omnia sensibilia, & sicut est possibile, ignote
consurge ad eius visionem qui est super omnem sub-
stantiam & cognitionem, Lay aside intellectuall
 operations and all things sensible, and as much
 as possible may be, vnkowne arise thow
 to the vision of him which is aboue all
 substance and knowledge. Notwithstan-
 ding, I say not that at the verie beginning of
 the contemplatiue life, one ought wholly to
 cast of all discourses of the Vnderstanding,
 this belonging to the perfectiō of the supree-

minent life; but I thought it necessarie to ad-
uertise this much therof, that knowing that
perfection consisteth not in such meditations
and discourses, a man should not wholie relie
on them, and also vnderstanding that the pure
and perfect contemplation is without such i-
maginarie discourses, he should not refuse the
doore to enter therinto when in due tyme
it shalbe opened vnto him, which is, when hee
hath well practised the Actiue life; and that (fi-
nally) hee shutt not the doore against the ho-
lie ghost, as some doe whoe determin not to
leauē of such discourses for any better thing
which may happē vnto them: And thus much
touching the acts of the Vnderstanding.

As for the acts of the VVill, they may also
haue their excesse and extremitie; not that
loue and feruour can be too great, for they ca-
neuer be great enough, but that such feruour
may be ill gouerned, and by too many acts
much hindered, as when the soule feeling the
draught and attractiō of the heavenly spouse,
she behaueth her self too actiuelly in his prese-
ce, multiplieng acts, and producing too many
aspiratiōs, or little short prayers, and affectiōs
of the heart, wherby the holie ghost can not
so well enter into the soule, nor so fully and
wholy possesse her, and by perfect vnion with
her make his abode, and take his peaceable re-
pose in her; so that trusting more to the indu-
trie of her owne naturall acts, then to the su-
pernaturall attractiō of her spouse, shee is nei-

uer drawne out of her self, and hauing more confidence in her owne operatiō then in the elevation of the holie ghost, shee is neuer lifted aboue her self, but remaineth still at one stay.

For remedy therfore of this incōuenience, the deuout soule must vnderstād, that though generally such aspirations &c. be verie good, yet not so good, but that at som tyme, in som particular point, there is some other exercise better thē they. And as their true and propre vse is in the actiue life, and at such tymes as wee be in sterilitie, and without ayde of the wind or tide of the holie ghost, so (speaking generally) their infructuous abuse is in the contēplatiue life, and when the soule is alreadie inflamed with the loue of God, and actuallie drawn by the holie ghost; and as in tyme of sterility our coldnes is therby inflamed, so, vsed in tyme of seruour, our loue is therby rather quenched; and as being vsed in our actiō, they lift the soule vpwards to contēplation, so being vsed in contemplation, they drawe her downwards to action, which alwayes is meant when they are too excessiue or too frequent.

*Remedie
for the
vill.*

VWhen therfore the contēplatiue soule shall find her self inflamed and drawn with the loue and tract of her spouse, let her with all sweetnes, and humilitie follow the same, and giuing place to the supernaturall operations of God, let her lay aside all these her naturall operations and acts, excepting so farre forth as may only serue her to follow the said

tract, and firmly adhear vnto her spouse, which shee must doe by such kind of acts as be much more interior and spirituall then the accustomed, so to haue correspondence as much as shee may, with the same operation of God, farre more spirituall then her accustomed; yea, so much more spirituall must they be and so far from sence, that the same should make no noyse in her interior, but remaining (as it were) in still and profound silence, shee should not so much worke as be wrought, nor so much doe by and of her self, as suffer the sweet operation of God, nor (finally) so much speake to God, as to heare
Psal. 34. what God speaketh in her sayeng, *Audiā quā loquatur in me Dominus Deus*, I will hear what my Lord God speaketh within mee; and so following the attraction of her spouse, and light of the holie ghost, shee shall be easily so farre drawne out of her self, and so highly eleuated into God, as those which haue not proued by experience can not conceiue.

An Aduertisment touching Prayer.

CHAP. XIX.

E E will conclude this first part
 VV with an Aduertisement of the
 means how to pray, according
 to the practise of this exercise. A man ther- *Fourre*
 fore may choose any of these fower wayes a- *sorts of*
 greeing to his vnderstanding and capacitie *prayer.*
 (to weet) Vocall prayer, which is the most *1.*
 vnperfect, as hauing least spirituall light, and
 serueth for the verie first Beginners: *2.*
 Secondly, Mentall prayer which is better, as hauing
 more light, and serueth for those that are past
 the beginning: Thirdly, Aspirations, which *3.*
 are little, short, feruent prayers, and enflamed
 suspires or desires, comming some tymes only
 from the heart, some tymes from the mouth,
 and is for the most part a more perfect kind,
 as hauing lesse speculation, and serueth for
 those that haue made some good progresse.
 Finally, the Prayer made in this only *vill of* *4.*
 God by adhearing only vnto him, which is the
 best kind of all, as being only grownded vpon
 and mayntained by the pure loue and charitie
 of God, and is fit for those whoe haue their
 spirit enflamed, simplified, and purged from
 all images and imaginations, or for such as
 (perhaps) haue not wholly attained therunto,
 but yet their courage and patience in expec-
 ting the tract of the holie ghost doth supplie
 their want. Those therefore which by their
 Confessors or directors shalbe iudged to be
 such, let them take this last meanes, and so

they shall find themselves suddainly illuminated, and eleuated vnto the true and essentiall contemplation; neither let them lose courage, nor thinke it idlenes or tyme lost, so to expect and remaine in the presence of God, and at the footē of the Crucifix; for so the soule profiteth more, brīgeth forth more profownd and spirituall acts, maketh a greater offering of herself, and a sweeter holocaust of the whole man, and (finally) pleaseth God more then when shee flieth through heauen, discoursing of diuine and deepe mysteries: and whensoever after such attending and due disposition, God shall come and visit her, shee shalbe more illuminated at one tyme, then not doing so, in a hundred. As for the others which are not as yet sufficient to practise this way, but take some of the others according to their capacite, they must notwithstanding alwayes remember, that they vse such meanes according to this Rule (namely) in this only *vwill* of God as hath bein taught (that is to say) that in all such vocall prayers, meditations, and aspirations, they haue this *vwill* of God so fully, soly, and wholly for their obiect and hearts desire, that they feele no will nor affection to be comforted, illuminated, or consoled in that their prayer, but only as farre forth as shall please God; which whoesoeuer will doe shall find excessiue comfort and ioy, because hee findeth the *vwill* of God, which is his only comfort and ioy: and therefore so it cometh

to passe, that hee which seeketh most his owne comfort, shall least find it, and contrariwise hee that for the only *vwill of God* seeketh it least, shall most amply find the same.

Six points therfore or interiour acts are necessary for them which make their meditations, aspirations, or contemplatiōs according to this practise. *Six interiour points necessary for prayer.*

The first is, to protest that they come to pray only for the *vwill of God* and to please him, without seeking consolation, illumination, or any satisfaction : But heer the fearfull and scrupulous soules must not think, that they are tyed heerto vnder paine of any synne either mortall or veniall, because this protestation is in nature of a good purpose, and not of any obligatorie promise.

1.

The second, to reflect on their interiour, and in sowing the depth thereof, to examin and discern without any partiality, whether they haue protested the truth or no; in which *examen* they ought to be verie diligent, and iudges indifferēt; and hee which shalbe faythfull in this point in sowing well his interiour, shall open the gate to perfect contēplatiō.

2.

The third, to amend and correct what they find cōtrarie to the said protestation, mastering proper loue, which solliciteth alwayes to desire sensible cōsolation, or at least spirituall.

3.

The fourth, to relie cōtinually on this diuine pleasure, as on the grownd and principall end

4.

of their prayer, not caring so much to make any curious discourses and meditation, nor to haue feruours and deuotions, nor (finally) to make their prayer according to self liking, as to conforme them selves to this diuine will, and to be vnited therunto by a totall resignation, to chearish the same in their heart with loue, and to adore it with profownd reuerence.

5. The fift, to discerne and examin somety-
mes, the foresaid protestation by a simple re-
flexion thereon, to see if it be not fallen from
her puritie, and in particular, if the tyme seeme
not tedious.

6. The sixt, to rest contented, yea and to
reioyce in heart, with a profownd ioy and
tranquility at the end of their prayer (whe-
ther it be sterile or feruent) that they haue
obtained what they desired (to weet) the ac-
complishment of the diuine pleasure.

Once en-
tered by
abnega-
tion, diffi-
cultie is
taken a-
vvay.

And note, that the soule which is once well
entred, and eleuated by this meanes of Abne-
gation for the vvill of God, both in and out of
prayer, shall find no great difficultie after-
wards, but shall at all tymes enter in again, as
hauing vndone the knott, fownd the secret,
and diued to the depth of this whole matter;
and as hauing by experience fownd God the
true light, ioy, and life, not whear shee
thought, nor whear ordinarily men seeke him
(namely) in our selves, or in our owne pro-

per will, nor in seeking our owne delight, ioy, light, and comfort ; but whear shee thought him not to be, and whear commonly men neuer seeke him (to weet) in renouncing our selves, yea and our spirituall ioy, consolation, and light , postposing them all and putting them (as it were) out of mind for the actuall remembrance, and great ioy which shee hath of the *vill of God* and to doe his pleasure; for, the cause why wee can not so renounce our selves absolutely for the *vill of God* , is for no other thing but that wee thinke wee should so leaue and loose both that which wee desire, and our owne contentment ; but when once by such experience the soule hath fownd out the contrarie, and that by renouncing, yea and forgetting her owne will and ioy for the diuine will ; her will and ioy is not annihilated nor lost , but is fownd in God according to his promise with an hundred tymes more; and shee feeleth now no more repugnance, nor sadnes to renounce her selfe , and offer vp to God her deer and only sonne *Isaac*, her proper will and ioy; knowing assuredly that though shee be bownd , and layd vpon the Altar of her heart, in the mountaine of prayer, and by the sword of Iustice readie to be beheaded, and in the fire of charitie shee be willing to consume him , yet shall hee not die but liue, and according to his name, shalbe changed into ioy and laughter. And of this subiect of

prayer, a man may see the little table or direction which wee haue made for a method, and entry to Meditation.

A daylie Examination to be made by the practiser of this exercise, vberin is contained the summe or abridgement of all this parte, in as much as concerneth the practise therof.

FIRST, let him examin whether hee hath gouerned himself, and ordered his actions according to the Rule of things commaunded forbidden, and indifferent.

Chap. 6. For the first sort; whether hee hath done the things comaunded by any lawe, custome, commandement, or intention of his superior master, father, or mother; and the same we say in like maner of things forbidden.

But as touching the third sort of things (namely) indifferent, being neither comaunded nor forbidden by any such lawe, let him examin himself whether hee hath done admitted, or receiued those which were against proper will and sensualitie, and contrariwise reiected and forsaken those which were agreable to the same, true discretion alwayes presupposed.

Chap. 7. Farther, touching things indifferent, as well in respect of commaundement as of prop

will and sensualitie (as being neither commaunded, nor yet contrarie, nor agreeable to proper will and sensualitie) let him take heed whether hee hath therein directed his intention according to this Rule, and not done them without any intention.

For the things commaunded which are pleasant to sensualitie or self loue, as to eate, drinke, to visit such places or persons as hee desireth, and the like, let him examin himself whether hee hath produced interiour acts of the will against such pleasure and contentment. And the like touching the things forbidden which are disagreeable to sence, and selfewill, whether he hath produced such acts, and so hath done the one, and left vndone the other for the *vwill of God*. But if after such interior acts, such delectation and contentment remaine; then whether hee hath still remayned firme in the superior part of his soule in doing the same for the *vwill of God*; and taken such pleasure for paine and as the crosse of *Christ* and true *vwill of God*, as is taught after the midst of the seauenth Chapter.

Moreover, let him examin him self touching the six degrees of the mysticall throne of pure intention; and first, if hee haue actually eleuated his intention in all these things, or whether hee hath forgottē the same, yet without his cōtrarie excesse of multiplieng to many Chap. 8.

acts, to the preiudice of the stomacke or braine; also without troubling himself with scruples and anxietie of mind, as though hee had committed some great synne when hee findeth himself to haue much failed therein; for this falte will happen verie often.

Chap. 9. Secondly, whether hee hath done them only for this will, or whether it hath been mingled with some other end, either bad or imperfect.

Chap. 10. Thirdlie, whether it hath been willingly with alacritie of mind, or with sadnes and heauines.

Chap. 11. Fourthly, whether it hath been accompanied with assurance, or whether with hesitation, doubting whether the things to done were the verie *v*vill of God, because it seemed of small valew; or els agreeable to sence; or (finally) because it seemed vile and abiect.

Chap. 12. Fiftly, if hee beheld this *v*vill of God cleerly with a liuely fayth without dullnes, or (as it were) sleepines or slownes of fayth.

Chap. 13. Sixtly, if all these degrees of perfection were speedily accomplished (that is) if at the beginning of the worke hee thus directed his intention; or if not, whether hee did it at least before the worke was finished.

Chap. 14. Seauenthly, if by stable perseuerance of this perfect intention, the soule hath prepared in herself a seat for king Salomon her celestial spouse; and that by meanes of the twoe wayes

layd downe to that effect.

Also, if in doing or suffering the foresaid things, hee employed himself in examining his intention, sitting out continually the imperfections therof; and (finally) in viewing whether it was established on these six degrees and thus much touching the generall and continuall practise of this part.

Besides the which, let him examin whether hee hath taken in hand, and vsed the meanes taught in the sixteenth chapter, whereby to enter the better into this practise, according to which meanes let him see if hee hath stinted himself euery day to a certaine number of mortifications, either touching the five sences of the boddie, or the three powers of the soule according as is thear taught, taking those occasions of this mortification which are thear layd downe. Chap. 16.

As touching Prayer, let him examin himself whether therein hee hath taken this only will of God for the end of his intention, not seeking any proper pleasure or contentment. Chap. 18.

And if any man at the first vnderstand not, or in practise doe not remember any of the points of this examination, let him see it more at large in the exercise it self, which hee shall easily find out by the chapters heer noted in the margin.

VVhich examination whoesoeuer shall daily vse, to exacting of himself continually

the due and faythfull practife of this exercise shall (no doubt) in verie short tyme attaine to true perfection.

But it is a thing most afured, that by this examination a man shall find himself to haue often tymes fayled heerin, in forgetting this *v*vill of God, and not directing his intention in his works; yea, some shall find that all day long they haue verie feldome so done, and verie little practised this exercise, wherof (experimented practife in others affording foreknowledge) I admonish and aduise the Reader before hand, that when hee findeth it in himself, hee think it not strange, nor be any way discouraged therat; but with all constancie goe forward, aswell because that dayly exercise will yeild the faythfull habit of such practife more familiar in him, as also because that though hee so often forget this practife yet shall hee doe much more good, and profit spiritually by those few tymes in which hee shall so direct his intention, and shalbe more illuminated in the knowledge of God and himself, then by any other practised all day long, by reason of the great merit of such a deiforme intention, and the light thereof which like vnto a Sonne being in our interior howse, leadeth vs vnto the sight of God, and discouereth all the fowlnes of

the passions, affections, and disorder of our
soule.

*Heer endeth the first parte
of the Rule of Perfection.*

Laus Deo.





THE
 RULE OF PERFECTION
 OF THE INTERIOUR
 (VVILL OF GOD.)
 CONTAYNING
 THE CONTEMPLATIVE
 LYFE.

THE SECOND PARTE.

VVHAT IS THE INTERIOUR
*vvill of God, and vvherin it differeth
 from the Exteriour.*

CHAP. I.

HA VING finished the first parte
 of this Rule, treating of the Exte-
 riour vvill of God (namely) what
 is, how to be knowne, and by what
 meanes to be accomplished; it followeth now
 that wee likewise deliuer the second parte
 the which consisteth of the Interiour vvill
 of God; shewing what it is, the way to knowe it
 and the meanes how to practice it.

This

This Interior will of God then, is the di-
vine pleasure knowne vnto vs by a perfect,
manifest, and expert interior knowledge, il-
luminating the soule in the Interior or Con-
templatiue life (that is) when shee seeth and
contemplateth her God, and inwardly expe-
rimenteth, perceiueth, and tasteth the diuine
will (to weet) the pleasure, and contentment
God taketh in such or such a thing.

*Descrip-
tion of the
interior
will of
God.*

And to the end to diue lower into the depth
of this will, and to discouer more essentially
how this actuall will, desire, and contentment
in our works is fownd in God, in whom is no
Accident, and to whome nothing can happen
a nue; I saye that it is by the meanes of man,
God vsing humaine will; which will (as tou-
ching good works) is common to God and
man, by reason of the vnion of God and man.
God (I saye) in this worke vseth humayne
will, in asmuch as it is a nue will and desire,
and humayne contentation as an Accident,
or a thing nuely felt or tasted; not that God
himself hath not also his will and contentation
in euery worke (as being the principall author
therof) but as suche, this will is not nue or
accidentall, or perceiuable of man; but is ma-
de perceiuable and nue to the nue will and
contentation humayne, conioyned and con-
formed to the diuine: by which conformitie
and coniunction, the diuine externall will and
contentation, communicateth and manifest-

teth it self to the humaine and temporall will and contentation; in such sort that man in this Interiour will, relisheth no whit his owne humayne will and contentation but Gods only, his owne being wholly swallowed vp, and transformed into Gods: For, this transformation requireth that all the powres and forces of our fowle be absolutely employed in God, and consequently, not any of them vpon himself; and by another consequence (as so transformed) feeleth no will of his owne but only that of God: I meane, that by this Deiforme Intention and diuine will, the fowle is so straightly vnited with God, and so replenished with spirit and lyfe, so eleuated, magnified, glorified, and deified, breif, so drowned in the abyss of the inaccessible eternall light, that shee feeleth no will or motion as her owne, but only as Gods, in whom only shee vieweth and feeleth her self, and all her motions.

*The sweetness
nes of this
vwill.*

This will, pleasure, and contentment of God, is so delitious a thing, and so pleasant to the fowle when so shee tasteth it perfectly, that it draweth, illuminateth, dilateth, extendeth, exalteth, raieth, and inebriateth her in such sort that shee feeleth no more any will, affection, or inclination of her owne, but wholly despoiled of her self, and all self-will, interest, and commoditie, is plunged into the bottomlesse gulfe of this will and the abyssall pleasure therof, and so is become one and the same


spirit with God.

The difference betwixt the Interiour and Exteriour will is, that the Exteriour taketh her light from abroad, and the Interiour from within (that is) the former is knowne by Exteriour things, as by the commaundements of God, of the church, of the Prelate, by customes, &c. but the other by Interiour things, as inspirations, illuminations, eleuations, and other the like attractions of God: The one is shaddowed with corporall things or by their images, and the other is wholly discouered in spirit and truth; the one hath in it accidentall things, but the other is in a maner wholly essentiall; the one consisteth of the ryne and pith (to weet) both of the Exteriour and interiour, but the other of the interiour only. All which notwithstanding is meant according to our capacitie, (to weet) that the will diuine is different, which in it self is alwayes but one and the same, as wee haue shewn in the beginning of the first parte, Chap. 4. but that our capacitie apprehendeth it so; and that in such maner, and by such degrees it discloseth and manifesteth it self vnto vs, as not ha-
Nemo rep̃t̃e fit summus
 ble to comprehend it at the very first otherwise, nor all at once, for, *Nemo rep̃t̃e fit summus*. No man becometh perfect on the suddaine sayth *Saint Bernard*. So that this diuine will *S. Bernard* and heauenly light descendeth vnto vs by *ard*.

degrees, and wee therby ascend vp to God by like degrees : and this is it which S. Thomas In opusc. sayth, *Sicut diuinum lumen gradatim decrescendo de humanit. Christi in nos descendit gradatim, ita contrario modo per ipsum lumen, in Deum reducimur gradatim & crescendo*, As the diuine light decreasing by degrees descendeth vnto vs by degrees, so on the contrary are wee drawne backe into God by the same light increasing, and by degrees; and that according to the Psalmist sayeng, They Psal. 83. shall proceed from vertue to vertue, the God of Gods shalbe seen in Sion (that is) in perfect contemplation (sayth the Glose) And in the Pro- Prou. 4. uerbs also, *Iustorum semita sicut lux splendens procedit, & crescit vsquè ad perfectum diem*, The way of the Iust proceedeth like a resplendēt light, and groweth to noone-daye; which day (according to the Glose) is lyfe euerlasting. So that this Interiour will discouereth not it self after one sorte, but diuersly and by degrees, like as neither wee doe comprehend it all at once, but by little and little and by the same degrees; wherof though one might set downe a great many, yet for breuitie I will reduce them all to fve (that is) Manifestation, Ad- miration, Humiliation, Exultation, and Ele- uation.

Of Manifestation, the first degree.

CHAP. II.

S touching the first degree then; *Manifestatio the.*
 this *Manifestation* of the Interiour *1. Degree.*
 will proceedeth of the pure inten-
 tion of the Interiour will, for the
 one springeth of the other as the effect of the
 cause, and the one followeth the other, and is
 transported therinto immediatly, if so be this
 intention be trulie pure, wee doing our worke
 with this only end of the *vwill of God*, all other
 intents and ends (though good) sett asyde,
 and (in fine) if it be accompanied with the
 six degrees specified in the first parte. For, af-
 ter such puritie of intention, it cannot be but
 the soule must tast of the Interiour will, and
 feele her internall touch, seing it is a Maxime
 in Philosophy, that *Whatsoever is moued, is*
moued of her end: now, a man cannot be mo-
 ued of any end, but that hee must needes see
 or feele that end; yf then hee be moued by
 this only end of the *vwill of God*, hee seeth and
 feeleth it within himself. But note this word
 (only) for if so be hee be moued by any other
 end, not only sinister, but good, hee cannot
 feele it be it neuer so good.

It proceedeth of a pure intention.

Why is it not tasted.

And (loe) heer the poynt wherin many fayle, the ditch wherinto many fall, and the rocke wheragainst many wracke, the which so stoppeth this spacious Oceane of the vvill of God, and maketh it so straight and vnnauigable, that the shippes of theyr fowles cannot make sayle therin (namely) because they haue some other end, although oftentimes so secret, that they themselves know not, neither can discern it, the which abuse is manifestly displayed in the 9. and other chapters ensuing of the first parte.

How this
choyce is
made.

But to the end to speake somewhat more essentially of this puritie of intention, which thus manifesteth the vvill of God; it is nothing els then a pure, and free choice which the fowle maketh by her free will of this diuine will and pleasure, in steed of her owne affection, passion, or will, and also of her worke; the which choice consisteth in an auersion from the Creature, and in a simple conuersion to the Creator; and is made by a true, faythfull, and simple regard of the vvill of God (that is) when in our worke, affection, or passion, wee cast our thought and spirituall sight on God, with all tranquillitie and repose, sweetly, serenely, and without all maner of stresse or violence; which thought or sight is free and in our powre, seated in the superiour parte of our fowle amidst all our affections, passions, afflictions, annoyes, and actions. And this

ought to be a great comfort, and encouragement to all such as are combated with their passions, and agitated with temptations. And now, by how much more quietly, simply, and without multiplicities we make and direct this respect, so much more manifestly shall we see and taste this diuine will; and also so much the sooner shall our spirit be simplified, by loosing all impression of the passion, and image of the worke. And this poynt ought to be well and maturely considered, as being the key to the contemplatiue life; wherefore I wish it may be well heeded.

Now then, hauing by puritie of intention in the Exterior will discovered this Interior, and the will of God being thus manifested vnto the soule by his sweet and secret touche, and (finally) being thus come to the first degree of Manifestation, one ought not presently to start from thence, but to the end to come to the other degrees, and more plainly and essentially discover the same, hee must diligently attend vnto this secret operation and inward touch of God, and withdrawing himself into his interior, endeavour to augment such sweet attractions, by cutting of all superfluitie of exterior and interior occupation, together with all manner of motions, multitude and multiplicities of thoughts, the noyse wherof may interrupt

The soule must plunge her self more deeply in the will of God hauing once found it.

the repose of the spoule, and theyr clamours hinder the fowle from hearing his sweet voyce, his delicious and mellifluous speeches vnto her, or from reioycing in his amorous and alluring aspect, sweet kisses, chaste embracements, or (finally) from feeling this efficacious inaction, and liuely touch of his good pleasure and will, the which hee ought still to nourish, conserue, and chearish within him in obeying and corresponding to his attraction and illumination, vntill the fowle attayne to see him (as it were) at Noone-daye, and that shee being become and made the self same with him, shee may haue no other will, ioye, or lyfe, then this *vwill of God*, the which is the perfection of the Interiour will: and by how much more purely a man addresseth his intention in the Exteriour will, so much more profowndly shall hee diue into the Interiour will.

*Letts of
the interi-
our vwill.*

And therefore those that tast not this interiour, ought to examyn and looke how they behaue themselves in the Exteriour (namely) whether they haue theyr Intention duly ordered (that is) whether they haue not any passion or affection in the worke in hand; whether they doe it meerly for that such is Gods will, without other end or intention whatsoeuer; in somme, whether such theyr intention be accompanied with the six degrees taught in the first parte: And so shall

they discover the impediments withholding them from entring into the Interiour.

Now (loe) this Manifestation and feeling proceedeth from the puritie of Intention in this manner: Puritie bringeth a mortification of passions and affections in the soule; mortification breedeth a great tranquillity, tranquillitie a profound silence; and in this profound silence the soule sayth, *Audiā quid loquatur in me Dominus Deus*, I will hearken what my

How this
degre pro-
ceedeth
from pu-
ritie of in-
tention.

Lord God speaketh within mee: and withall hearing and knowing like a true sheepe his sweet voyce, shee cannot contayne her but as

Psal. 84.

his true spouse, in abundance of hearts-ease breaketh out and sayth, *Vox dilecti pulsantis*, a-

Cant. 5.

peri mibi (soror mea, sponsa) Loe, the voyce of my deerly beloued knocking and sayeng, Open vnto mee (my sifter, my spouse) And,

Sonet vox tua in auribus nostris, vox enim tua dulcis

Cant. 2.

& facies tua decora, Let thy voyce sound within myne eares, for (loe) the voyce is sweet, and the face beautifull: And being (as it were) inebriated with this sweet inuitation shee answereth him and sayth, *Quām dulcia faucibus*

Psal. 118.

meis eloquia tua, super mel ori meo, How sweet are thy words to my palate, more sweet then honny to my mouth; And againe, *Ignitum elo-*

Ibid.

quium tuum vehementer, & seruus tuus dilexit illud, Thy speach is vehemently inflamed, and thy seruant delighteth therein. Breif, hauing well knowne his voyce and the sweetnesse therof,

shee cannot refrayne from breaking forth in
Cant. 5. to his prayſes, ſayeng, *Guttur illius ſuauiſſi-*
Cant. 5. *num*, His throat or voyce is moſt ſweet; inſo-
much that, *Anima mea liquefacta eſt vt dilectus*
loquutus eſt, My ſowle did melt and diſſolue
aſſoone as my beloued ſpake vnto mee.

In like manner this puritie of Intention
bringeth with it (as is ſayd) a diſſipation
of paſſions and affections; and this diſſipation
worketh a ſerenitie in the ſowle, which
ſerenitie maketh the Sun of Juſtice to ſhine
in our interiour *Horizon*, and manifeſt him-
ſelf vnto vs.

Againe, this puritie of intention doth dri-
ue away the appetits and concupiſcences of
our owne will, which being caſt of, their con-
traries take vp theyr place; ſo that wheras be-
fore a man had no appetite but to his owne
peruerſe will, now relliſheth hee nothing els
then the *vwill of God*; and therefore the *Pſalmiſt*
Pſal. 33. ſayth, *Guſtate & videte quàm ſuauiſ eſt Dominus*,
Taſt and ſee how ſweet our Lord is.

Finally, this puritie of intention perteth and
beateth downe the wall of ſelf-will, behind
which the ſpouſe diſcrieth her heauēly Groo-
me, as ſhee affirmeth ſayeng, *En, ipſe ſtat poſt*
parietem noſtram, proſpiciens per cancellos, reſpiciens
per feneftras, Behold, whear hee ſtanderh be-
hind our wall, caſting his eye in at the grates,
looking in at the windowes. For, what other

Is this thick wall which hindreth vs to see
 God though neer vs, but our self-will which
 separateth vs frō him, according as it is layd,
Iniquitates vestra diuiserunt inter vos & Deum, Isay. 59.
 Your iniquities haue made a diuision or a
 wall betwixt yow and God? And what are
 the grates in this wall through which hee be-
 holdeth the spouse, but the breaches and
 gapps which shee maketh in this her self-will,
 by the heauy hammer of Abnegation? Also
 what are these windowes in the wall wherat
 hee vieweth her, but pure intentions through
 brenunciation of all vncleanesse?

It is then the puritie of Intention that dis-
 couereth God, and manifesteth vnto the soule
 and maketh her tast his will; so as by this
 manifestation shee plainly seeth, and experi-
 menteth that which before shee but only pos-
 sessed: shee vnderstandeth (I say) seeth, and
 tasteth this diuine will in her owne capacitie,
 enjoying therein as in her owne, and that with
 so much more pleasure as shee feeleth the one
 to be more delicious, penetratiue, and in-
 criating then the other; and also plungeth,
 and transformeth her self therinto with so
 much more force, and violence of ardent
 loue, by how much shee discouereth it to be
 better to liue therein, then in her owne will; the
 which hauing once taken full, fast, and peacea-
 ble possession of her, draweth, exalteth, ravi-
 sheth, and cōioyneth her inseparably to it self,

and lifteth her vp as Amber doth the strawe; and like a torrent of delights breaking out vpon her and ouerflowing her, doth so water and inebriate her, and so wholly replenish her interiour, that like as melted and dissolued into a sea of sweetnesse, shee remaineth so cleane depriued of her owne forces and powers; that the diuine will taketh plenary possession of her, through an absolute maysterie, and without all manner of contradiction; impelling her onward to all goodnesse, and working in her, by her, and with her, all these holie and amorous interiour operations and effects.

And note, that betwixt this Manifestation and puritie of intention, there is a mutuall augmentation and reciprocall encrease; for, as that springeth of this, so this augmenteth by that; wherfore how much greater is the puritie of Intention, so much cleerer also will be the Manifestation; and how much cleerer is this Manifestation, so much greater will be that puritie of Intention; and how much sooner the soule shall haue attayned this puritie, so much the speedier shall shee likewise enioy that Manifestation. Finally, when the soule hath once fownd this treasor and tasted this pleasure, it shall not be hard for her to renounce from thenceforth her self, and to continue this puritie of Intention, seeing that a man easily forgoeth the lesser good and

Of Admiration the second Degree.

CHAP. III.

AFTER this Manifestation of the pleasure which God taketh in the execution of his will, succeedeth another degree (to wheet) *Admiration*, proceeding of three principall causes: the first whereof is the greatnes of God; the second a mans owne Nothing; the third the admirable familiaritie of God with the soule.

*Admirat
tion the
2. degree.*

*It procee-
deth of 3.
causes.*

As touching the first; the vnmeasurable greatnes of God almightie beginneth heer to discouer it self so wonderfully, that it wholly astonisheth the soule; for this interiour will by which shee is absorbed, and with which shee is become one and the self same thing, geueth her so true knowledge of God, that shee knoweth and seeth that there is nothing else but hee, and that there is but one being or Essence which is true, and that all things els but it are nothing: which although they haue some certaine borrowed being in the, yett they haue it not so, as that there is any comparison to be made betwixt their being and that of Gods, from which it all proceedeth; whoe should not be infinit if there were any other

*The great
nes of
God.
1. Cause.*

then hee; for thear should hee end whear that other should beginne. Now then the fowlle knowing, and seeing this veritie by her owne experience, shee is so grownded and established therein (not by particular discourse of the vnderstanding, but by a generall and simple view and by her inheasion to God) as that shee neither seeth, knoweth, nor feeleth any other thing then this infinite essence, and incomprehensible beautie; wherwith astonished, shee heerhence beginneth to tast the immensitie or infinitie which shee had but only heard tell of afore; and this experimentall knowledge of the infinitie of God ingendreth this *Admiration* in the fowlle.

Our nothing.

2. Cause.

Furthermore, this *Admiration* is augmented by the contrarie cause (to weet) our Nothing, which is as great an extremitie on the other side, and no lesse profownd gulf; the perfect knowledge of which poynt cometh by the knowledge of the other, for *Contraria iuxta se posita magis elucescunt*, Contraries set one by another are more eident: so that like as black is more perspicuous set by white, so doth mans Nothing appeare more cleerly, being compared with the immensitie of God; as also on the other side the immensitie of God, by comparison with mans Nothing, yea, these twoe poynts are so incident one to the other, that without the one yow cannot knowe the other, insomuch that a man can

neuer see the infinite Essence of God, till first hee knowe his owne Nothing ; neither yet his owne nothing , before hee haue the true knowledge of this diuine immensitie; but the fowle once knowing it, knoweth forthwith right perfectly her owne Nothing ; the sight wherof putting her into an astonishment and admiration , maketh her to break forth and say with the Prophet, *Ad nihilum redactus sum* *Psa. 72.* & *nesciui*, I ame brought to nothing and wist it not ; for why shee hath so long contemplated, and so intimately embraced this infinite Essence in this will, that when shee returneth to behold her self in conference, and comparison with this infinitie, shee acknowledgeth her self meer vanitie and a very Nothing ; the which acknowledgement freeth her, and geueth her a frank accesse to God, and free egresse and regresse vnto him at her pleasure, as hee himself witnesseth sayeng, *Egredietur & ingredietur, & pascua inueniet*, Shee *Ioan. 10.* shall goe forth and enter , and shall find pasture.

But these twoe diuine illustrations and operations are followed by a third (to weet) by a great familiaritie and sweetness which our Sauour vseth toward the fowle , wherat shee remayneth yet more astonished , for that commonly , like seek and accompanie with theyr like , as Noblemen with Noblemen, gentlemen with

gentlemen, ploughmen with ploughmen, beggers with beggers, insomuch as to see a Lord conuerse with a begger, were a note of Heroycall and admirable goodnesse in him; but if a king should be seene to doe it, it would be reputed an humilitie and condescent worthy of immortall memorie: now what were all this goodnesse and humilitie compared with Gods, whose so vouchsafeth to conuerse with man? truly, nothing els but mallice, and pride. If then it seemeth so greate goodnes, one worme of the earth to conuerse with another, what bountie (trow yee) is it to see the king of kings and God of Gods familiar with a worme, and which hath nothing but cometh from him? yea, which is most of all, with a syn full sowle and his enemy? seeking her, wooing her, chearing her, shewing her all louely and gracious regard, and incessantly honoring her with some particular grace or other; in fine, making shewe as though hee had some speciall need of her; yea seeking her grace with such instance, loue, and humilitie, as though all his good depended on her consent, and all his felicitie consisted in her fauor.

The sowle (loe) mounted to this degree, and seing with an illuminat eye the extent of so infinit goodnes of God toward her, not only falleth into a profownd admiration therof, but departeth euen out of her self through

through extreame astonishment, so farre forth
 as falling therby as into a trance or Extasie,
 in excesse of loue and ioy shee crieth out
 sayeng, *Fulcite me floribus, stipate me malis, quia* *Can. 2.*
amore langueo, Prop mee vp with flowres,
 beset mee rownd with apples, for (loe) I lan-
 guish for loue. If the twoe Queenes, Hester
 and shee of *Saba* fell into an extasie, the one in
 beholding the glorie of king *Assuerus*, the o-
 ther in viewing that of *Salomon*, what marueill
 may it seeme to the sowle, to see so excessiue
 loue and goodnes of Allmightie God himself
 toward her? But what are these flowres which
 may so support and prop her vp in her lan-
 guishment, but the examples of *Iesus Christ*, the
 which shee desireth to imitate? sayeng within
 her self: I desire to forgoe and renounce my
 owne will by his example, for the *vwill of God*,
 and be obedient therunto vntill death as hee
 was, and to annihilate my self like him, to the
 end I may render some parte of my debts to
 that vnmeasurable goodnes: I languish of the
 wownds which loue hath made in my heart
 with the arrowe called *Sagitta electa* the choise *Isay. 49.*
 arrowe, the which that diuine Archer (whoe
 is Charitie) hath shot into my heart eftsoo-
 nes vpon his Manifestation vnto mee, and
 whoe also like a good Archer hath followed
 his arrowe, so that both are fixed in my heart,
 and lodged in my bowells as it is sayd, *Ad eum Psal. 14.*
veniemus, & mansionem apud eum faciemus, V Vee

Luc. 12.

will come, and will abide with him. Behold, this arrowe is all on fier, and neuer cometh but to kindle this fier in our land; the heat therof burneth mee, the loue inflameth mee, the ardour melteth and dissolueth mee like wax

Psal. 77.

before the fier, consuming all my forces, and (in fine) maketh mee to die vnto my self and liue to God; and how farther this arrowe per- ceth and my wovnd is greater, so much more incurable is my languor, and holsome my hurt. And therefore is it that I entreat yow to support mee with the flowres and examples of *Iesus Christ*, and to strengthen mee with the apples of odoriferant prayers; for (loe) these flowres and frutes are as pillars wheron I rest mee and am borne vp, as being as hard as Adamant, high as heauen, of depth bottom- lesse, of durance endlesse.

See heer, how this holie fowlle speaketh, rapt in admiration of this infinite goodnesse, and wholly infiered and inflamed with the ar- dēt loue of her heauenly spouse; and not hable to containe any lōger, breaketh out through excesse offeruor into inward tearmes and boyling acts, tearmes and acts vnderstood rather of God then of herself; and is by this meanes highly lifted vp to God: and by how much the more shee admireth him, so much more is her eleuation, and so much the cleerer and essentiall her discouerie, and view of the diuine will and sweete pleasure of God; and

by how much more shee admireth him, so much the higher is her eleuation; and reciprocally how much higher is her eleuation, so much the more shee admireth him, and is made therby so much the more capable of that goodnesse.

But note, that I meane not that *explicitè* the soule rest and stay on these three poynts, nor that shee practice them by way of consideration; but rather that they present themselves generally vnto her as diuine lights, shee not leauing of the Contemplation of the diuine will to seeke them, but wholly and continually remayning fixed therein.

These degrees be not considerations.

Of Humiliation, the 3. degree.

CHAP. IIII.

AFTER this *Admiration* ensueth *Humiliation*, a degree which followeth immediately after hauing discried and admired the diuine immensity and omnipotencie, in that the soule hath cleerly seene that God is euery whear, as hauing seene him without and within her, aboue and belowe her, on euery side and rownd about her, and after hauing perfectly perceiued that God is more inwardly within her then shee herself: moreouer, hauing knowne his goodnesse, tasted his sweetnesse, seene his beauty, en-

Humiliation. 3. Degree.

ioyed his familiaritie , and experimented in her his liuely and efficacious Inaction , his sweet and secret operation , his strong and violent attraction, and (finally) after hauing compared her vilitie , her mallice , her nothing , with the immense glorie and goodnesse of God, shee beginneth to produce profound (though most secret and subtile) acts of humilitie, sayeng one while with S. Peter, *Recede á me quia homo peccator sum* , Depart from mee, for (loe) I ame a sinfull wight; And anon with S. Elizabeth, *Et vnde hoc mihi ?* VVhence and from what goodnesse cometh it, that God vouchesafeth thus to come and visit mee ? Otherwhiles againe with S. Peter , *Tu mihi lauas pedes ?* Comest thou to wash the feete of my muddy and earthly affections through thy heavenly and familiar condescent and chearishings? thou (my Lord and God of all glorie) wilt thou through the familiar and delicious operation of thy diuine will, thus daigne to disgust mee of myne owne bitter and abiect will ? what! thou that art the king of kings and Lord of Lords, wilt thou abase thy self so lowe as to conioyne thy will with myne , and operate so familiarly with, in, and by it, and endure that it doe one and the same act with, in, and by thy diuine will. Lord, I ame affrighted at this noueltie, astonished at this bounty, and ouerwhelmed with this glorie and maiestie, and ame not hable to endure

Luc. 5.

Luc. 1.

Ioan. 13.

Apoc. 19.

so great abatement of thy greatnesse, nor sustaine so great a flashe of thy splendure, nor comprehend such excesse of goodnesse, nor abide so strong assault of so infinit loue; Recede a me, Lord, depart from mee a sinner, *Et dimitte me paululum ut plangam dolorem meum*, And leaue mee a while to wayle my sinnes; els, *Non lauabis mihi pedes in aeternum*, Thow shalt not wash the feete (of my passions and affections) with thy familiar blandishments and heauenly delices. To whom as to her that vnderstandeth not as yet that mysterie, God answereth, *Quod ego facio tu nescis modo, scies autem postea*, Ibid. VVhat I doe, thow knowest not now, thow shalt know it heerafter. As if hee would saye, My spouse, thow vnderstandest not the effect and consequence of this my worke; thinke not that I doe it only to manifest vnto thee my benignitie, but also to releiue thy necessitie, for why; *Si non lauero te non habebis partem mecum*, Ibid. Vnlesse I washe thee thow shalt haue no parte with mee; if by the tract of my spirit I plucke thee not out of thy fleshe; if by the tast of my true pleasure I make thee not forgoe the false; if with the relish of my heauenly sweetnes I make thee not distast the earthly; if by the peace of my will and pleasure I free thee not from the warre of thy passions; if by a ioy in my will I make thee not forsake thine owne; if (finally) by a supernaturall contentment and repose I make thee

Apoc. 21.

not cast of that of nature, thow shalt remaine
 euer thine owne, and allwayes in thy self, ha-
 uing the feet of thy affections still fowle and
 soyled with earthly myer, and consequently
 canst haue no parte with mee in that goodly
 Citty of mine, wherinto *Nulū intrabit coinqui-*
natum, No defiled thing shall enter: and ther-
 fore by this my liuely, efficacious, sweet, and
 familiar operation in, and with thee, it plea-
 seth mee to wash and make cleane thy feete
 (to weete) the inferiour parte of thy fowle,
 from all spot of passion and disordinate affec-
 tion, and radically to plant my will in thee,
 wherby to make thee my liuely temple, holie
 tabernacle, Paradise of pleasure, and (brief) to
 make thee one spirit with mee, yea myne ow-
 ne sweet spouse for euer and euer, for *Sponsabo*
te mihi in aeternum, I will espouse thee for euer.

Osee. 2.

The fowle thus seing that such is his diuine
 will, which is her only lyfe and ioye, and to
 the which shee aspieth from the bottome of
 her heart, with an vnsatiabie desier to resigne
 herself wholly therunto, answereth, *Domine*
non tantum pedes meos, sed & manus & caput, O
 Lord, wash not only my feet, but my hands
 and head also, that I may not only haue cleane
 feet for to walk in thy wayes, but also an illu-
 mined vnderstanding to knowe thy lawe, and
 innocent hands to doe good workes, wherby
 being wholly despoyled of the old man, I may
 from henceforth say, not only *Lavi pedes meos*,

Ioan. 13.

Cant. 5.

quomodò coinquinabo eos? I haue walsht my feet,
 how shall I now fowlle the any more? but also,
Exui me tunica mea, quomodò induam illam? I haue Ibid.
 put of my garmēt, how shall I put it on againe?
 wherunto the spouse answereth, *Qui lotus est,* Ioan. 13.
non indiget nisi vt lauet pedes, sed est mundus totus,
 Hee that is washed, needeth not but only to
 wash his feet, but is wholly cleane: for, if thou
 haue no vaine affections thou shalt be cleane
 all ouer, *Et macula non erit in te,* And thear shalbe Cant. 4.
 no spot in thee: and therfore let me doe my
 will in thee, let mee operate like a true spouse,
 let my spirit repose in thee, let mee labour
 together with thee, for that according to the
 word I haue passed vnto thee, *Sponsabo te mihi* Osee. 2.
in fide, I will espouse thee in fayth.

The sowlle hauing vnderstood this myste-
 rie, as one wholly dissolued into sweetnes, and
 inflamed with loue, sayth, *Anima mea liquefac-* Cant. 5.
ta est vt dilectus loquutus est, I was wholly dissol-
 ued as soone as I heard my beloued speake;
 and goeth on in spirit with the virgin Marie
 sayeng, *Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum* Luc. 1.
verbum tuum, Loe heer thy handmayd (oh
 Lord) be it vnto mee as thou hast sayd. And
 heerupon, by such her sweet consent and
 hearty resignation to the vwill of God, shee be-
 cometh straightly vnited therunto, receiueth
 it into her, and (finally) is become therby
 the mother of Iesus Christ, for (quoth hee)

Quicumque fecerit voluntatem patris mei qui est in cœlis, hic frater, & soror, & mater mea est, VVhoe so doth the will of my father whoe is in heauen, hee is my Brother, my Sister, and my Mother. And the sowlle hauing so spiritually conceiued him, and being become great of him, shee charily keepeth, cherisheth, nourisheth, worshippingeth, and adoreth him in her heart, like as the virgin *Marie* did in her boddie; and so (to be short) shee is blessed, not for being the wombe which beareth him, or the teates which nurfeth him, but for being shee whoe hath heard the word of God and kept it.

Luc. 11.

This dialogue passeth in spirit.

Now, albeit this Dialogue passe not betwixt God and the sowlle in these expresse and formall tearmes, yet silently and in spirit they passe in effect and substance within the sowlle in this her desire of Humiliation; the which spirituall effect a man cannot expresse but by such articulate words. And thus by this degree of Humiliation ought the sowlle learne to humble herself amid the familiar visitations and blandishments of her heauenly spouse (that is to say) behaue her with as profownd reuerence toward that great maiestie, as it daigneth to stoope in so great familiaritie to her; and ought to take great heed not to render herself reciprocally familiar vnto him as to her equall, for so should shee make of this familiaritie a wall betwixt God

and her, and a very thick clowd which would hinder her from the cleer aspect of the spouse, and from wading forward into his greatnesse; a poynt wherin many spirituall persons doe very much preiudice themselves, forgetting through Gods great familiaritie with them, to render vnto him a due and profownd reuerence.

The reason why such familiaritie of the *Why fa* sowle toward God is such an obstacle and *miliarity* clowd, is because that therby shee accomoda- *makes a* teth the greatnesse of God to her smallnesse, *vall be-* and his diuinitie to her humanitie, and so *uixt* *God and* seeth almost nothing at all out of her self, nor *the Soule* any greatnesse aboue her owne; wheras by profownd reuerence shee is rayfed vp aboue her self to the greatnes of God, and proportionateth herself in some sort to him, and her humanitie to his Dietie, and so shee seeth things which are aboue her; in the one God is proportionated to the sowle, in the other the sowle to God; in the one God is abased without that the sowle is any whit lifted vp, in the other the sowle is lifted vp, without that God is any whit abased: And so yow see the one serueth as a clowd to vayle the greatnesse of God from the sowle, and the other as a light wherby to discern it.

Of Exultation, the 4. degree.

CHAP. V.

Exulta-
tion. 5.
Degree.

Whereof
it cometh.

1.

2.

3.

Luc. 1.

EXULTATION of heart ensueth incidently the degree of *Humiliation*; for, the same causes which doe humble her, doe likewise make her exult, because her smallnesse which sheweth her that shee is nothing of her self, doth likewise shewe her how shee is all in God ; and how in leauing a being finite , shee vniteth her to an infinite , knowing well that seing shee is nothing of her self, but of that which is (to weet) God ; and if then shee subsist of him whoe sustaineth her , that consequently hee is in her and shee in him : and heerin consisteth the true *Exultation* of the heart. The greatnesse also, and magnificence of God as they doe humble her , so likewise doe they rayse in her this Iubilation , seing herself made one and the same with them. Moreouer, the familiaritie of God, or spirituall conception aforesayd of *Iesus Christ* causeth this humilitie in her, and that humilitie is accompanied with *Exultation* , insomuch as after that humble conception shee singeth with the virgin *Marie*, *Exultauit spiritus meus in Deo Salutari*

meo, quia respexit humilitatem ancilla sua, My spirit exulteth in God my Saviour, because hee hath respected the humilitie of his hand-mayd. Finally, another more essentiall cause then these which produceth this extreame *Exultation*, is, the marueillous and inseparable vnion of the spirit of man with God: wherof for that I haue already treated in the 2. chapter of the first Parte, I forbear heere to speak, referring the Reader therunto.

4.

Of this Iubilie and *Exultation* of spirit spake shee whoe hauing tasted it sayd, *Exultabimus, & letabimur in te, memores vberum tuorum super vinum*, VVe will exult and reioyce in thee, remembring (that is) hauing experimented that thy teates are better then wyne: Shee sayth better then wyne, *In quo est Luxuria*, *Ephe. 5.* VVherin is Luxurie, wherunto this *Exultation* is contrarie, as being *Vinum germinans virgines*, *Zach. 6.* The wyne which engendreth virgins or the celibate lyfe, and making a man for the fruition of these spirituall delights, to despise all the pleasures of the flesh, for, *Gustato spiritu deficit omnis Caro*, The spirit once tasted, all flesh fayleth.

The effects of this *Exultation* are, that it withdraweth vs from all vagaries, re-
tayneth vs at home within our Interiour, affwageth the dolour of Abnegation, encourageth Pusillanimitie, commaundeth affections and bridleth Passions; also, it is an


The effects of
Exultation.

oyle which supplēth the stubburnes of mynd,
 sweetneth the bitternes of the heart, sollageth
 the tediousnes of lyfe, and reioyceth the spi-
 rit; it is a saulce which maketh toothsome the
 vnsauorie morsell of mortification, a medi-
 cine which healeth the wownds of affliction;
 a water which strengthēth the debilitie of
 the spirituall sight: In fine, it maketh vs de-
 spise all carnall consolation, forget all world-
 ly delights, surmount our calamities, to sit at
 ease amid our toyles and trauayles, and to
 triumphe ouer our infernall foes: it maketh
 easie, things seeming impossible, it geueth
 courage to perseuere, it openeth Paradise, and
 waisting the sowle ouer a sea of miseries, lif-
 teth her vp to heauen, as shee of whome is
 sayd, *Quæ est ista quæ ascendit de deserto, delitijs af-
 fluens, innixa super dilectum suum?* VVhoe is this
 that ascendeth from the desert, abounding in
 delights, leaning vpon her beloued, and firm-
 ly vnited to him?

Cant. 3.

Of Elevation, the 5. degree.

CHAP. VI.


AFTER this degree of *Exultation* *Elevation*.
 succeedeth the last of *Elevation* of *5. Degree*.
 the will and mind into God; the cau-
 ses wherof are all the former de-
 grees (to weet) *Manifestation*, *Admiration*, *Hu-*
miliation, and *Exultation*.

For first, that of *Manifestation* sheweth the *effects*.
 soule as farre as her reach extēdeth the *vill* *1.*
 of God, and how shee is in God, making her
 truly, really, and experimentally to tast it in
 her owne capacitie (namely) that it is spirit
 and lyfe; a thing so surpassing all vnderstan-
 ding, as that no witt or doctrine can compre-
 hend it, seing that naturally none can exceed
 the bownds of Nature, but to know what is
 spirit and lyfe a man must be in spirit and lyfe,
 which is aboue nature and beyond the acti-
 uitie of her Sphear, and so not naturally to be
 knowne; but this degree of *Manifestation* dis-
 closeth vnto vs the *vill* of God (spirit and lyfe)
 in that it lyfteth vs vp aboue nature; yet not-
 withstanding forasmuch as this degree dis-
 couereth not the *vill* of God so plainly as the
 others in theyr order, so neither doth it lift
 vp the soule so much as they, but as it doth
 but only begin the discouerie, so doth it but
 begin to lift vp the soule into God.

Admiration, likewise as is manifest, listeth *2.*
 vp the soule, for that *Admiration* being no-
 thing els but a totall extension of the soule,
 and all her powers vpon an object beyond

and aboue her capacitie, it must of necessitie lift vp the admiring soule, for that such extension of her self, and totall application of her powers to this will, causeth consequently on the one side an auersion from exterior things, by a totall intraction of her powers and senses, and on the other a perfect inherence or adhesion therunto wherby to comprehend it; the which auersion, and conuersion or adhesion to the supernaturall object work this *Elevation*.

3. The like is of *Humiliation*, eleuating the
Luc. I. soule as is shewne, *Quia respexit humilitatem ancilla sua*, For that hee hath respected the humilitie of his hand-mayd: and a while after, *Et exaltauit humiles*, And hath exalted the humble: It eleuateth her (I say) not only in grace, vertue, and fauor of God, but also in actual Contemplation and experimētall knowledge of him; for that by such act of *Humiliation* (as is shewed) a man reducing himself with all other things to nothing, hee seeth God in all things, or rather all things to be God, and consequently can see nothing but God euery whear; and this is the true *Elevation*.

4. Then for *Exultation*, the like also is of it; being but an excesssiue spirituall ioy, the plenarie abundance wherof replenisheth wholly the soule, and with her extreame sweetnes so inebriateth her, as that cleane forgetting the world and all creatures, yea her self, shee

remaineth wholly fixed in this fountaine of ioye (to weet) God, whoe hath totally seized vpon all her powres, and so strooken and wounded her heart, and taken a full possession therof, that shee hauing now no more dominion ouer herself, followeth his inflaming instincts and attractions all in all, and (as it were) hand in hand, geueth eare to his wordes, embraceth his doctrine, and (finally) geueth herself wholly ouer vnto him, submitting and subiecting her to his good pleasure; followeth him like as doth the shadowe the boddie; adheareth to him like the Accident to the Substance, like the Circumference to the Center, the member to the boddie, the branche to the vine, and the parte to the wholle; and so is perfectly becom one and the same spirit with God, for, *Qui adharet Deo, Corin. 6. vnus spiritus est*, VVhoe so adheareth to God, is one spirit with him.

Thus then it appeareth how the Interiour *vill of God* cometh not all at once but by little and little, and how the soule feeleth it by degrees, shee being without this diuine will like vnto the world, wholly repleat and couered all ouer with the darknesse of the night, and it on the other side like vnto the Sun or day, the which as it approcheth, expelleth and banisheth all that darkenesse, leauing her like a little world all ouer illumined; but as the daye commeth not all at once but by degrees,

*Similie
not an.*

and successiueiy , so likewise doth this will:

1. *Degree.* For, as in the morning the day beginneth to appear, and shew it self by little and little , so also doth this diuine will in the beginning of Pure intention.

2. *Degree.* After followeth the dawne or breake of day , which sheweth manifestly that the day is entred into the word; wherunto resembleth the degree of *Manifestation* , which in like manner manifesteth that the *vwill of God* is entred

3. *Degree.* into the fowle. Then afterward the Sun beginneth to ryse , lightning the world somewhat more, and this resembleth the degree of *Admiration*, by which the fowle apprehendeth more perspicuously the *vwill of God* , and

4. *Degree.* is therby more illuminated then before. After this the Sun dischafeth all the darknesse of the night, the which is the degree of *Humiliation*, wherby (namely) by the great abasement and annihilation of the fowle shee discouereth more essentially this *vwill of God* , and vniting her self perfectly therunto, disper-

5. *Degree.* seth all her spirituall fogg and darknesse. After all this , the Sun sheweth himself in his full and compleat beautie and brightnesse, suche , as that therby it cheereth and cherisheth all creatures both reasonable and vnreasonable ; which office appertaineth to this degree of *Exultation* , wherein the *vwill of God* sheweth it self so fayer and admirable , that the splendure therof cheereth and reioyceth
the

the reasonable and vnreasonable parte of man. Finally, the Sun after all the foresayd 6. Degree degrees, riseth so high and very bright, that therby the world is likewise cleane eleuated out of the deepe darknesse of the night, vnto that splendure which wee see at Noone day; the which representeth this last degree of *Elevation*; the *vvill of God* bringing at last so great light and splendure with it, as that the sowle is quite exalted out of the abyssse of her spirituall darknesse, euen to the perfect contemplation of God her true Sun, with whome being arrayed like the woman in the *Apocalypse*, and, *Amicta lumine sicut vestimento*, Clad all in light like as with a garment, the Angells fall on admiring her, sayeng, *Qua est ista qua progreditur quasi aurora consurgens, pulchra vt luna, electa vt sol, terribilis vt castrorum Acies ordinata?* *Apoc. 12.*
Psal. 103.
Cant. 6.
 VVhoe is this that cometh forth like the rising morning, beautifull as the Moone, choyce as the Sun, and terrible like an Armay in battayle array?

Certaine Aduises touching the
 premisses.

CHAP. VII.

L

Admises.

1.

NO T E, that I propose not these degrees as poynts or considerations to meditate vpon, but as effects which this diuine will operateth in the soule, the same effects not arriuing so much by her owne industrie, as by the operation and illustration of that will within her, shee only disposing herself therunto by the cutting of of all affections and passions, and by pure intention, listning in all peace and repose of heart, profownd silence, and tranquillitie of spirit to this diuine will.

2.

Moreover, thear are some whoe for being too actiue and exteriour, attayne only to the actiue will, without tasting at all the contemplatiue or interiour. Others some thear are

3.

that attayne to so high degree, that they see almost continually the interiour will; and suche see not the Exteriour, because that the Exteriour they haue made the Interiour. A-

4.

gain, some haue attained the perfection to abyde in the supereminent will, and those see neither the Exteriour nor the Interiour will, for, of both they haue made the supereminent; not that the one and the others doe not the work contayned in the first parte, according to the rules of things commaunded or forbidden, for that (loe) were a very grosse error, wherof I haue aduertised yow in the sayd first parte, as likewise doe heer againe; but that they doe those works interiourly with an

other manner of intention, and more eminent meanes.

To conclude, yow must be admonished not to retayne precisly in your mind the Ideaes of those degrees and diuisions of the diuine will, to stay therevpon; but as that will is in it self spirit and lyfe without all maner of image or *Idea*, so and in such sort must yee endeuer (as neer as may be) to contēplate it, these degrees and diuisions seruing only to help and make capable therof, the sowles that haue not yet tasted the same, and which without such diuision are not hable to cōprehend it, as is shewed afore in the first and fowrth chapter of the first parte; for, as the light of the day may be distinguished by degrees, according to his successiue and peece-meale coming into the world, and yet in it self is simple and without distinction and multiplicitie; so the light of this diuine will may be distinguished by that it sheweth it self successiuely vnto the soule, and yet for all that is most simple, vniforme, and voyd of degrees and multiplicities; for like as the Sun sheweth himself in one degree of light at breake of day; at his vprising in another, at Noone in another, and yet is but all one light; euen so this diuine will discouereth it self in one degree of light to Beginners, in another to Proficients, and in a third to the Perfect.

Similie.

Note also, that although I say, that yow

Note
vwill.

must feele and tast in your self this will and pleasure of God, yet must yow neuer byde vpon that feeling, yea though grownded on the Abnegation of your owne will, and vpon the *vwill of God*; for, although it be right good to take a tast and contentment in the abnegation of your self, and in the *vwill of God*, yet must yow not for all that insist and dwell vpon that tast and contentment, but meerly in the *vwill of God*. For better vnderstanding wherof yow are to weet, that in this act of Abnegation thear concurre twoe things, Renunciation and Contentment; on the first wherof yow are to insist and rest, but not vpon the latter. So likewise in the act of Resignation vnto the *vwill of God* thear are twoe things (to weet) the Resignation it self, and the Tast that one taketh therin; on the former wherof yow are to repose, but not on the other. For default of which obseruation and due discoverie of this deceit, I haue knowne some very much abused; and that so much the more, by how much this error is subtile, and couered with a fayer pretext of Abnegation or Resignation.

7. Finally, yow must not think your self habile to attayne to this second parte of the *vwill of God*, till yow haue first well and dulie practised the first by true and long mortifications; as hath bein touched in the 18. chap. of the first parte.

*An Examination necessarie to be vsed by
the Practiser of this second Parte of
the vwill of God.*

CHAP. VIII.

AS for this second Parte, it needeth *Poynts to*
no exact Examination, for that it *be exami-*
consisteth rather of effects of the *ned.*
spirit then of any industrie of ours;
only it shall suffice to examin.

First, whether (hauing fownd by the first
degree of *Manifestation* this Interiour will)
yow haue conserued, chearished, and enter-
tayned it, without being distracted; reiecting
all passions, and mortifieng all affections, so
farre forth as that yow haue had no other
ioye, consolation, and lyfe, then in the same.

If when yow could not haue this *Manifesta-*
tion nor tast of this diuine will, yow haue
searched in the bottome of your heart the
cause therof, with a strict examination whe-
ther yow haue not had any passion of ioy, or
sadnesse, feare, loue, hatred, or any affection
of willing or nilling; and hauing fownd any
such, whether yow haue faythfully repelled it
or no.

Furthermore, for as much as the degree

of *Admiration* dependeth and proceedeth of three poynts (to weet) of the Immenſitie of God, of his Familiaritie, and of our owne Nothing, as hath bein ſhewne, examin whether yow haue duely annihilated your ſelf; for that, of this annihilation dependeth the perfect familiaritie, and knowledge of the immenſitie of God.

4. As touching the 3. degree of *Humiliation*, yow are to reuiſe whether toward the familiaritie and blandiſhment of the heauenly Spouſe, your ſowle haue carried and comported herſelf humbly (that is) with as profownd reuerence toward ſo great maiestie, as it hath daigned to ſtoope ſo familiarly to her; or whether contrariewiſe ſhee haue forgotten her ſelf, in rendring him reciprocall familiaritie as to her equall, and ſo haue made of ſuch her preſumption a wall (as it were) betwixt God and her, or a vayle or thick clowde, wherby ſhee is hindred truly to contemplate her Spouſe, and diue into his greatneſſe; a falte which many ſpirituall perſons commit to theyr great damage, not knowing with the familiarity of God, to reſerue and render vnto him a due and profownd reuerence.

5. Examin alſo, whether yow haue duely vſed the ioy and *Exultation* of Spirit, in inſuſing and plunging your ſowle farther into the vvil of God, and made vſe therof toward a

more intense and profound Renunciation of your self, in driving away all pusillanimities and yrk-somnesse of mind, and all imagined difficultie of mortification, without reposing sensually thereon. As for *Elevation*, that is a degree or effect dependant of the fowre former.

6.

Finally, whether yow haue continually borne in mind, that yow are not expressely to retaine therein, the images or representations of the degrees related in the second parte, nor the diuisions of the *vwill of God*, but rather whether yow haue endeouored according to your powre and capacitie, to knowe and contemplate it such as it is in it self (to weet) simple, and without all maner of image or diuision; though to declare it vnto yow it hath bein necessarie to diuide it as yow haue

7.

seene. Likewise, whether yow haue

8.

taken the same 5. degrees, not

for your owne acts, but for

operations and effects

of the Spirit of

God in yow.

*Heer endeth the Second parte of the
Rule of Perfection.*

Laus Deo.



THE COPPIE OF AN
ADVISE TOUCHING PRAYER,
*giuen vnto one, afflicted by reason of the
great sterilitie vvhich hee
found therein.*

3. Princi-
pall things
in Prayr.

1.

THE first and principall thing
which a man ought in Prayer to
doe, is to rectifie his intention
(that is) to take it in hand only
because God would haue it so, without any
other end or motiue whatsoever; and to con-
tinue the same only end and motiue.

2.

The second is, after such Protestation, to
examin his interiour, and discerne if (hauing
protested such intention) hee hath sayd true
or no; and this by a simple view or reflexion
on himself, examining his heart and sowing
the bottome of his interiour, whether there
be not any other thing besides this will lodged
therin; as, if hee desire the end of Prayer; if
hee feelee any tediousnesse therin; if hee seek
occasion to depart or to be called away; if hee
wish to be illuminated, enflamed, or consol-
ated in any sort whatsoever, as well in the su-
perior or spirituall parte of the soule, as in

the inferiour or sensible ; and finding by the *examen* any of these things or other whatsoever, hee must reiect it as a pernicious and venomous serpent , and as opposite to the fore-sayd protestation and *vwill* of God. Now, this reflexion and *examen* is nothing els , but to *How to examin the intention.* iudge and feele wherto his mind is drawne, what hee wisheth , desireth , and taketh pleasure in , or contrariwise in what hee is displeased, discomforted, and what hee flieth.

The third thing is, the continuance of this *examen* and reflexion, if so be that hee taketh *3. For praye grownded upon the only vwill of God, continuation of examē.* only for his Prayer and subiect this *vwill* of God, to the end that the fowle remaining in her puritie, discharged of all affaires, and not being hindred by any other sight , may continually view , fixedly and soly contemplate, and sweetly tast this pleasure and delicious contentment of God. Or els, hee ought often *For other sorte of Prayer, frequent reflexion.* to visit it by a frequent reflexion, if hee take for his subiect meditations and aspirations; to the end that perceiuing any other thing to intrude it self into his interiour, hee may reiect it as opposite and contrarie to this puritie of intention, yea, the very desire of illumination and of high contemplation: and this reiection must be no otherwise done then by the same will, in turning by a simple conuersion therunto , and by a contempt, auersion, and obliuion of all creatures.

And note, that for the most parte, the hin- *Secret den*

ceptions.

drance of the puritie of intention, and deception of well minded persons, are the good desires, which doe hinder, retayne, and ruine so much the more this integritie of intention, by how much the lesse they are discovered and held for such, as (for example) the desires of seruour, deuotion, teares, contrition, and illumination; for, inasmuch as they are disguised with the cloake of pietie, one taketh no heed of them, so that without suspicion, the desire of them entreth into the bottome of the heart, and wholly possesseth and ruleth it, not leauing roome for the vwill of God, the which often tymes is quite cōtrarie (to weet) that hee be not consoled nor illuminated, neither that hee haue teares and sensible deuotion; for, true deuotion consisteth only in contenting himself with this vwill of God, or (as saith S. Thomas) promptly to doe that which appertaineth to his seruice.

*What is
true deuotion.*

2. 2. qu.

82. art. 1.

*The grownd of
all perfection.*

This blindness continually commeth, because (as is sayd) a man looketh only on the cloak and exteriour of such desires, and not on their interiour true substance and effects, which indeed are nothing els but consolation and illumination; yea, proper will, naturall contentment, and self loue. For, yow must knowe that the wholle stable fowndation and grownd of perfection, is the vwill of God, which ought alwayes to be seene and shine in our interiour, and neuer to vanishe away

nor be left of either by affliction or consolation; no more in ariditie, sterilitie, and contradiction, then in deuotion, consolation, and perfect resignation; because that this will is a thing so celestiall and transcendent, that it reformeth all deformitie, and rectifieth all crookednes, and as a thing firme and stable, dischargeth and (as it were) absorbeth all vacillation and instabilitie, and is no lesse in our pouertie, sterilitie, and fragilitie, then in our abundance, deuotion, and perfection, though not according to sence, but to reason; wherof wee are assured by the diuine powre and prouidence governing all things.

VVhoe then desireth true contentment of mind, and to liue with quietnesse in God, it is *How to* *repose continually* *in God.* necessarie that hee alwayes establisth himself vpon this vnmoueable fowndation, and cornerstone of the *vwill of God*, reposing continually thereon, and that, by way of Resignatiō. But as this fowndation is not alwayes sensible, but often hath residence only in the Reason, so likewise some tymes a man can not haue this Resignation sensible; but only the reasonable; the which hee may alwayes haue, euen when the sence is quite contrarie to the Resignatiō; for, one may be resigned when hee hath any contradiction, sterilitie, or subtraction of deuotion, notwithstanding the contradiction of the sence, all the which hee may accept as the *vwill of God*: yea, if hee feele not in himself the courage so to accept it and

resigne himself, hee must mount higher, and take as the *vwill of God* this Irresignation; and if yet the darkenes be so great that hee can not thus doe, hee must also resigne his darknesse: if (finally) by reason of tediousnesse hee hath not the will to performe any of these things, hee must offer to God this tediousnes and defect of good will, and take it at his hands as his will in this maner, reducing to Resignation the letts of Resignation which may occurre; to the end that in this sort, allwayes and incessantly the *vwill of God* may (as is aboue sayd) deuoure all things, and that a man may dwell allwayes therein: and this kind of Resignation of Irresignation is farre more frutefull, meritorious, and sublime, and leading more directly to the true vnion with God, mortification of himself, and transcendence ouer all things, then that which is done according to sence; and a man may say that the one is simple, and the other dubble; yea, that the one is so many tymes dubbled as it doth absorb and surmount intrinsecall obstacles.

*A perfect
Resignation.*

Note.

And note, that this Rule of accepting all things at the hands of God is so generali, that it hath no exception, in such sort that a man must accept not only the extrinsecall crosses and afflictions of the world, and of his neighbour at the hands of God, but also the very intrinsecall, proceeding from his imperfec-

tions, for , *Omnia cooperantur in bonum diligentibus Deum.* Rom. 8.

The three points of this aduertisement are more particularly distinguished into 6. in the 19. chapter of this rule of Perfection, and are not only fit for the perfect but also for the Beginners, that therby perceiuing the true end of Prayer, they may tend therunto by a more straight line; the want wherof causeth diuers (euen spirituall men) to passe many yeares, yea some theyr wholle lyfe, not only without attayning to any perfection in Prayer, but also without knowing the true end therof, which is the will and pleasure of God.





A LETTER CONTAY-
NING AN ANSWER TO A
doubt touching the Object of the vwill
of God.

DEAR Brother; this present shall be for your satisfaction, and to resolve yow touching a certaine doubt which yow fownd in reading the exercise of the vwill of God. And as cōcerning that which yow say; first, that there is great difference betwixt God and his will; for my part I acknowledge no such: For, I think that hee which seeth this essentiall will (to weet) considered only in God, by consequence hath seen God, and that as one and the same thing, not as diuerse; for in God there is nothing but God. And touching this point and the elucidation thereof, there is nere a whole chapter in the third part, where there are not too many arguments which proue it, and too many Doctours there alleaged which with one consent affirme not the same: concerning which also, I haue had heertofore the aduise of some Diuines, though the thing be of it self too cleer, and likewise the Method sayth the same. But I see your error heerin

proceedeth from this cause (to weete) that yow haue not well marked how I haue diuided it into three sorts of wills, yow hauing no respect to the difference therof; not that in it self, but in vs it is distinguished. Now, yow notwithstanding write to mee of the *vwill of God* in generall, not expressing which of the 3. yow speake of. And it is no marueil if yow know not the sublimitie, and nuditie which I attribute to the essētiāll *vwill of God*, seing yow haue not read what I haue written therof; and therefore yow ought not to condemne a thing which yow neuer haue but halfe seen. For, whoe so hath read the third part, I doubt, rather will reprehend the contrarie fault (namely) that it is too naked, abstract, and spirituall, and nothing els but God.

Now, yow alleage that this exercise admitteth some Obiect, wherof is no particular one in God. To which I answer, that this word (Obiect) may be vnderstood twoe maner of wayes; for a generall, or for a particular obiect. As concerning the generall which is God himself, I answer that the third or supereminent will admitteth also no other but him, though not so in the first and second part, whear thear is some particular obiect which to the Beginners seemeth to cause some difference betwixt God and this *VWill*; but it is because that at the first this diuine will sheweth it self as exteriour, and then after as in-

terious, and finally, as essentiall; not that in it self it is variable or different, for that cometh of our part whoe so doe contemplate it proportionably to our light which is small, and not wholly abstract from an object in the Active life. Now, this light is greater in the Contemplative life, and most great in the Supereminēt, whear this will is seen to be God himself, which appeareth more plaine by the similitude which followeth.

*Similie
not an.*

Yow must knowe then, that this exterior will is like a riuer which runneth into the sea, for so doth this will carrie our soule to God: and as the riuer-water is not called the sea though it be the same water, so this exterior will is not properly called God though it be but one and the same spirit; and as the limits only, and not the substance causeth it to be called a Riuer and not the Sea, so the limits of this will, and not the substance giueth it the name of VVill, and not of God; and as the limits of the riuer haue not their Originall from the same, so the limits of this will proceed not thereof but from our darknes; and as, if there were no land wee should see no riuer but all sea, because there would be no limit, so if there were in vs no clowd of darknes, wee should see no more this will as such, but only God, as is declared in the ninth Chapter of the 3. parte: And as the shipp in this riuer being not hindered, necessarily is transported by the streame

Streame therof into the sea, so the soule ha-
uing no impediment, is caried by the course
of this will vnto the naked Essence of God;
and as when one is so led into the maine O-
cean, hee seeth no more the riuer (though the
same in substance) but the sea, so hee which is
transported into the essentiall will, seeth no
more this (as such) but God only.

Yf yow demand why in the beginning a
man taketh not God for the Object of this
exercise without this *vwill*, I aske why doth
not one leape ouer the stile before hee come
at it? or why the ship which is at *Roan* doth
not ride in the sea at *Nerubauen*, rather then
in the riuer of *Roan*? If yow say because it is
at *Roan* and not at *Nerubauen*, I answer the
like; that the Beginners are not in this ample
and spacious essentiall sea of God, but in this
riuer of his *vwill* which will leade thē therto.
And I hold it a point of great indiscretion to
set a little bote on the maine sea, and a Begin-
ner in the naked Ocean of the diuine essence.
Yow may see therefore, why at the beginning
I haue not denudated this exercise of an Ob-
iect: yow may also perceiue in some sort that
it was the only, perfect, succinct point, and
that which bringeth most light, which I could
choose wherinto compendiously to reduce
the whole spirituall life, without euer leauing
it of, or seeking others, no lesse then the ship
which to goe into the sea, neuer leaueth the

riuer wherein shee rideth. In the beginning I only call it *vwill* and not *God*, because one of these twoe words fitteth better the Actiue life the other, because more properly wee say in the Actiue life; I will doe this thing because it is the *vwill of God*, the to say, because it is *God*: also that would be too sublime a doctrine, and (litterally taken) scarce to be admitted: likewise because all exercises, wayes, vertues, and perfections, are better reduced to this, then to any other point. In the Contemplatiue life also or second part, I doe not take this word *God*, because there is yet some image though verie subtile and secret. Finally, in the Supereminent life or third part, I doe not alter this word *vwill*, fearing least a man might think that I had chaged the point or object of this exercise; but I keep allwayes the same word, keeping still the distinction of three Epithets (to weet) *Exteriour*, for the Actiue life; *Interiour*, for the Contemplatiue, and *Essentiall*, for the Supereminent; VVhich must be noted for auoyding in this exercise both error and confusion. And thus much for the resolution of your doubt. From Orleans, this 16. of August. 1593.

Your Brother in Christ Iesus B. Benet

Forasmuch as the third part mentioned of this Rule, treateth only of things abstract, of high contemplation of the Essence of God; it is thought unfitting the common sort, and therefore not convenient to be published, vnlesse (perchance) heer after vpon some farther reasons or experience of these two parts, it shall other wise seeme meet. Meane tyme these so abundantly, plainly, and succinctly shew the meanes and lay open the way to perfection that the diligent Practiser of them, without the other shall quickly attayne therunto.

